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THE
ANCIENT CITIES OF THE NEW WORLD.



DÉSIRÉ CHARNAY.

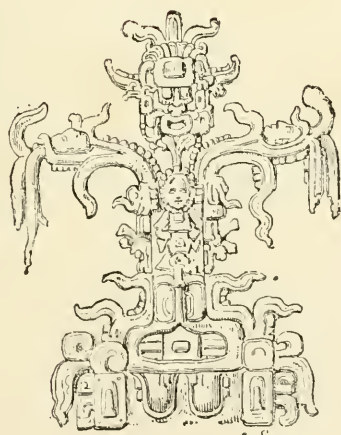
THE
ANCIENT CITIES
OF THE
NEW WORLD.

BEING
Trabels and Explorations in Mexico and Central America
FROM 1857-1882.

BY
DÉSIRÉ CHARNAY.

With numerous Illustrations.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY
J. GONINO AND HELEN S. CONANT.



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TO

MR. PETER LORILLARD.

SIR,

WHEN the Minister of Public Instruction entrusted me with the study of the Ancient American Civilisations, you wished to become associated with my labours in a truly munificent spirit. You will find in the following pages the result of my discoveries, which, you are aware, were attended with perfect success. I strove, during the progress of these studies, to carry out the programme laid down by you towards the reconstruction of civilisations that have passed away. I think I have succeeded ; and I hope to have sufficiently demonstrated that these civilisations had but one and the same origin—that they were Toltec and comparatively modern. If the learned world shall confirm my theory, and success crown my endeavours ; if it shall be found that I have solved this vexed American question, so hotly controverted hitherto, it will be mainly due to your generous support.

Pray accept the dedication of this Work as a token of my deep gratitude.

DÉSIRÉ CHARNAY.

TRANSLATORS' NOTE.

THE justification for having ventured to correct the spelling of some proper names, and other slight emendations, is to be found in the Author's Preface, where he states that "he often trusted an uncertain memory for his quotations, and that his book was written between two expeditions." There is more: it was deemed advisable, to suit a restless and exacting generation, to reduce the bulk of the volume, a task which was not undertaken without fear and trembling, the Translator being painfully conscious of shortcomings, and that retrenchment may have been where it should rather have expanded, and expanded where it should have retrenched.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION.

THE first notice upon this work appeared in the *North American Review*, the energetic Editor of which (Mr. A. Th. Rice) wished to be before all his contemporaries in giving his subscribers an *aperçu* of my labours. Unfortunately for them that publication contained my impressions of the moment, just as I dotted them down, which, as a natural consequence, had to be modified *pari passu* with my discoveries, whilst my quotations, owing to an uncertain memory, were not much to offer readers of such intrinsic merit. A second publication followed in the *Tour du Monde*, but although better thought out than the first, even that was too hastily written to do justice to the magnificent collection I now present to the public, in which the entire design I had at heart is revealed; and if the account of my discoveries, the issue which naturally follows, the theory I wish to establish, are still couched in language which may appear crude and incomplete, I ask the indulgence of my readers on the plea that this edition received the last touch between two expeditions. On the other hand the subject is so vast, that I only aimed at giving a broad outline, hoping for greater leisure at some future time.

My wish has been so to write as to be easily understood by all; to this end I have given my book the dual form of

a journal as well as a scientific account: in it I recount the history of a civilisation which has long passed away, which is hardly known, or rather which has been systematically misunderstood and misrepresented. My explorations led me to the uplands of Mexico, the first establishments of the civilising race, and enabled me to trace the Toltecs step by step to their highest development in the various regions of Central America, and not unfrequently to give a certain date, to re-establish historical truth. There is nothing very extraordinary in this reconstruction, which, at first beautifully simple, became complicated with the countless contradictory accounts which have been published in regard to it. In the hands of the Spanish padres, origins, however obscure, were made to agree with the Biblical narrative both in their ponderous commentaries and their ridiculous systems, which, starting with the confusion of tongues, travelled on to the lost tribes of Israel, ending with the legend which ascribes to St. Thomas the apostleship of America. Modern historians have not been much better in this respect, and the last century has produced a stupendous amount of the most extraordinary publications, forming an inextricable labyrinth, of which the immense compilation of Bancroft may serve as an example.

The cause of this confusion is twofold: first and foremost, the destruction of nearly all the Indian documents by the conquerors; and secondly, the small degree of interest they felt for anything that dated before their advent. The first accounts, such as Ixtlilxochitl's for instance, were written from narratives more or less trustworthy, delivered from memory by the natives, in which, as might be expected, the most incoherent traditions are mixed up with certain historical facts, without discrimination or the slightest spirit of criticism; for science is but of yesterday, and archæology, anthropology, and philology were as yet unknown.

This explains why, if we except those things which fell under their personal observation, later historians are so infinitely superior to the ancient.

Up to the present day authentic documents have been wanting; for without any fault or demerit on the part of the explorers, their drawings of monuments, however carefully done, could not cope with modern photographs and squeezes. On the other hand, each traveller writing, it is true, from actual observation, but confining himself to one district, could only describe a few of the principal ruins, so that his theory respecting them was untenable when compared or applied to the ruins of the whole country. Thus it came to pass that the various epochs of American civilisation were dealt with as so many distinct civilisations, producing the utmost confusion. Whereas a sound study of American civilisation should set aside preconceived opinions and commentaries, and confine itself to its monuments, original documents, and such passages in ancient writers descriptive or explanatory of the end and object of these monuments, not neglecting the powerful aid of photography and squeezes; when a judicious and intelligent comparison of the relation these monuments bear to one another, must soon force the conviction that, whatever the time which divides them or the difference in their details, they belong to one and the same civilisation, and that of comparatively recent date—namely the Toltec.

We shall leave the question of first origins as being unnecessary for our purpose; as also traditions, prehistoric legends, language, and religion, confining ourselves to what may be termed history; that is, beginning with the arrival of the cultured Toltecs in Mexico. We shall note their establishment in the valley of Tula, their development on the high plateaux, the disruption of their empire; how they transmitted their industries and mechanical arts to the people who succeeded them; and lastly, we shall

follow them in their exodus and find the traces of their civilisation everywhere on their passage and in the regions of Central America.

With regard to my theory on the relatively recent period of American civilisation and its Toltec origin, I am far from being the first in upholding it, since Stephens and Humboldt affirmed it some fifty years ago, whilst all the ancient chroniclers implied it. Is ancient Egypt less interesting because her MSS. are now read and her origin known? Why then should the people who raised the American monuments be less deserving of our regard, because they built them ten centuries sooner or ten centuries later? Does it alter the character of the monuments, or destroy an art unknown to us hitherto?

The question of first origins has always seemed to me an idle pursuit; and if the evolutionist doctrine is true, a perfect moral microscope would be required to reach the remote past of man, whose countless generations, scattered in every clime, go back to the dark period when our rude progenitors were hardly distinguished from the brute creation. Will it ever be possible to penetrate beyond? Besides, our ancestors have nothing in common with the autochthones of America, whom I firmly believe to have come from the extreme East. My reasons for this opinion are based on the fact that their architecture is so like the Japanese as to seem identical; that their decorative designs resemble the Chinese; whilst their customs, habits, sculpture, language, castes, and polity recall the Malays both in Cambodia, Annam, and Java. The word "Lacandon," which is the name of a tribe in Central America, is also, according to Dr. Neis, that of a race in Indo-China, who spell it "Lah-Canh-dong." F. Garnier says that "the Cambodians build their huts on piles some six or nine feet above the ground. At first sight it might be attributed to the

necessity for protecting themselves from inundations ; but as this mode of construction is found in places where no such danger exists, it must be ascribed to the *instinct* of a *particular* race" (it is the instinct of the Toltecs which caused them to erect their edifices on esplanades and pyramids) ; and in his description of the *Khmer* monuments at Angor-Tom and Angor-Wat he adds : " They are placed on pyramids of three to five stories high," etc. The analogy is also seen in the ornamentation of the buildings, where the human figure is rudely treated, whilst great care is observable in the other decorative designs, a point which always struck us in American sculpture. It should also be remarked that bricks covered with plaster, stucco decoration, cemented floors, roads, and courtyards are common to the Malays and the Americans ; whilst the corbel vault is found in Java, Cambodia, and America. Again, some temples at Lawoe, in Java, are built on pyramids, having a staircase on the slope leading to the edifice, like those of the Toltecs. This resemblance has struck every traveller, and is the more important that these monuments only date from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and are far removed from those edifices which were introduced in Java by the followers of Buddha and Brahma ; but the destruction of Indian temples and Indian beliefs was succeeded by an architectural atavism, a return to a Malay primitive type, evidenced by the monuments at Lawoe, which I visited in 1878, a fact which I think of vital importance.

Castes are purely Asiatic and unknown among the Red Indians, but they existed with the Toltecs, where the commonwealth was divided into distinct classes of priests, warriors, merchants, and tillers of the soil ; whilst land was held in common, and a feudal system is apparent with both the Toltecs and Malays. Two languages are used in Java and Cambodia ; one to address superiors, the other for the vulgar. This was

also the case with the Toltecs, and gave rise to two different written languages. Finally, the worship of serpents as gods of wisdom, like Quetzalcoatl, is found in India, Greece, China, Japan, and particularly in Cambodia and Java. To us these points of resemblance are more than mere coincidence; something better than fortuitous analogies: they seem to point to a vast and novel field for the investigation of archæologists.

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THE ANCIENT CITIES OF THE NEW WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

VERA CRUZ AND PUEBLA.

My former Mission—The present one—Why called Franco-American—Vera Cruz—Railway from Vera Cruz to Mexico—Warm Region—Temperate Region—Cordova—Orizaba—Maltrata—Cold Region—Esperanza—Puebla and Tlascala—The Old Route.

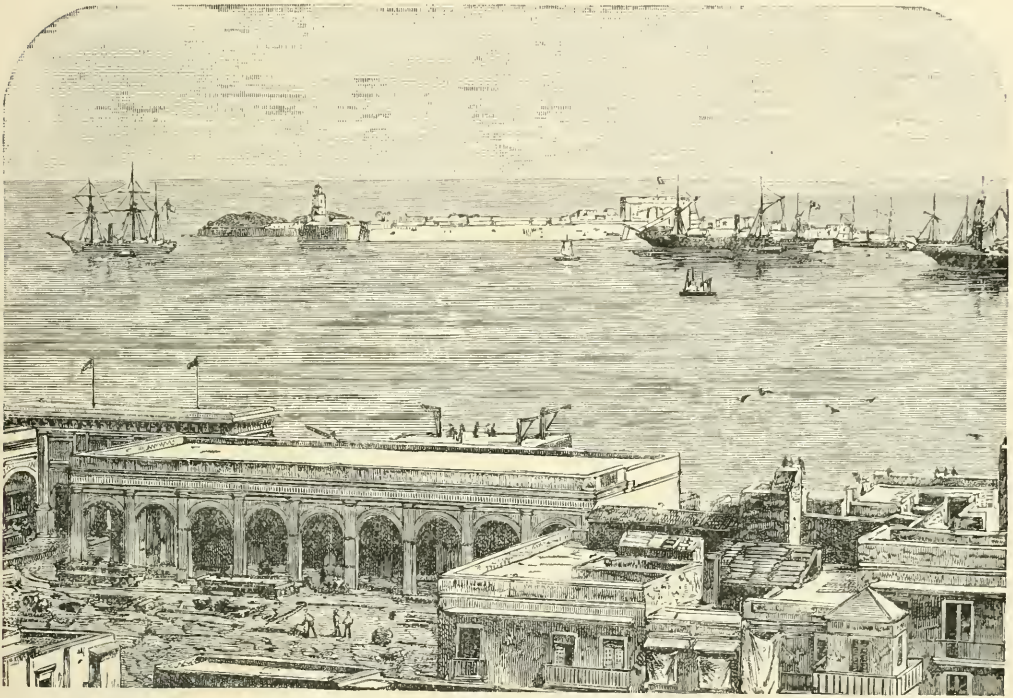
WHEN I started for Mexico in 1880, I already knew something of the country, having, in the year 1857, been sent out as delegate for my Government to explore parts of it. At that time I was rich in hopes and full of grand intentions, but poor in knowledge and light of purse, and I soon learnt that the work I had undertaken was of so difficult and complicated a character, that the whole thing was beyond my powers; and, finding that from want both of money and of technical knowledge I was unable to carry out the great schemes I had imagined, I contented myself with simply photographing some of the monuments as I visited them, without even venturing to add any comment thereto. Now all was different. Better prepared in every way: with additional knowledge, backed by influential supporters, and with the aid of numerous documents which I had collected, I

felt I might reasonably hope to be able to throw some light on one of the most obscure corners of the history of man.

But at the very moment when the Minister of Public Instruction, on the advice of the Commission for Missions and Travels, was again entrusting me with the exploration of Mexico, that I might study its monuments, it so chanced that a rich American, Mr. Lorillard, of New York, was also minded to fit out a scientific expedition for the same purpose, and that I was the man he had fixed upon to direct it. The latter had already set apart a considerable sum of money for the expedition, so that I found myself placed in a somewhat delicate position, for, by refusing Mr. Lorillard, I should have risked a dangerous competition in the very country and the very places I was to explore; and, by accepting, I should have seemed to give up my nationality, and to deprive my own country of many precious documents and interesting collections. I felt myself, therefore, fortunate in being able to combine the two rival expeditions, and, under the name of a Franco-American Mission, to carry out the important work, and in this I was assisted by the unparalleled generosity of Mr. Lorillard, who gave up to France all the fruits of my labour, my researches, and my discoveries. It was under such circumstances that I started on the 26th of March, 1880, and taking New York on my way, to pay my respects to my generous sleeping-partner, I reached Vera Cruz at the end of April.

The aspect of Vera Cruz, seen from the sea, is anything but pretty, consisting of a monotonous line of houses, blackened by heavy rain and the driving *Norte*. Built on a sandy shore, surrounded by barren hills stripped of all vegetation, and low-lying lagoons, Vera Cruz may safely be pronounced the most unhealthy place in Mexico. Yellow fever is never absent from its shores, and with every new batch of immigrants it becomes

epidemic and violent in the extreme, fastening on the newcomers with unusual severity. We learnt that to our cost, at the time of the war of intervention, when our soldiers were literally decimated by this fearful scourge. It became necessary to replace the white troops by negro battalions, the latter withstanding better than Europeans the fury of the epidemic.



A VIEW OF VERA CRUZ AND THE FORT OF SAN JUAN OF ULLOA.

Vera Cruz can scarcely be said to possess a harbour, having only an indifferent anchorage, in which ships are far from safe. Fort St. Juan affords the only shelter, but in bad weather vessels frequently break from their moorings, and are thrown or driven on to the coast. A storm here is synonymous with north wind, and when it blows no words can give an adequate idea of its violence; it is not a straightforward, honest tempest, such as every good mariner knows how to cope with, but it comes in

terrific and sudden squalls, carrying whirlwinds of sand, which penetrate the best-closed houses; consequently, on the first indication of its approach, every dwelling is securely fastened, barges are taken in and chained up, vessels lower their double anchors, the harbour becomes empty, all work is suspended, and the place wears the aspect of a deserted city. The thermometer falls suddenly, the porter, with teeth chattering, wraps himself in his blanket, a woollen overcoat is quickly substituted for the ordinary white holland jacket, and every one goes about shivering with cold. The pier is soon hidden by the huge waves raised by the disturbed element, in the harbour vessels get foul of one another, and steamers to avoid shipwreck get up steam, ready to take their station outside.

Vera Cruz welcomed us with one of these strong north winds, which obliged us to stay for three days in the roadstead, unable to leave our steamer; and when I *did* land, I was so glad, so happy at once more feeling the ground under my feet, that I failed to notice, as I had done before, the very uncomfortable pavement of the town, which consists of sharp pointed stones; but just as a sheep has a portion of his fleece torn from him by every bramble he passes by, so does every traveller leave some portion of his individuality in every country which he visits—and on seeing again the places he has known before, he thinks to himself that he will be welcomed by the same impressions, the same friendships, nay, the same adventures as before will be there. He believes he will find everything exactly as he left it, he looks forward to shaking hands with a particular friend, to revisiting a certain spot, to entering a certain house, whose kind inmates had always had a warm welcome for him. He arrives, but the scene is changed, the old well-remembered spot is laid waste, the house a heap of ruins, friends dead, and Time, alas! has done its fatal work.

After two-and-twenty years' absence, I eagerly looked forward to shaking hands with the friends I had left. The returning traveller looks back on two-and-twenty years as but a day; to him it seems but yesterday that he left the place; every one will, of course, know him again; every one will come forward and warmly welcome him back. Heaven help him! The quarter of a century, which he has hardly taken into account, has in reality weighed heavily on him, as upon all; even should he be fortunate enough to recognise a few acquaintances, they have completely forgotten him, and like Rip Van Winkle, he seems to awake from a hundred years' sleep—to find all changed, and everything about him strange and new. In my own case, the only friend I found was the oldest of all, whom I thought I was never likely to see again. But it was not until I had told him my name that he recognised me; for at first he saw nothing but a perfect stranger standing before him. I inquired after A—he was no more; and B?—dead; and C?—dead also. I stopped, I was afraid to go on. It was under the burden of impressions such as these that I found myself once more in Vera Cruz.

And yet Vera Cruz, situated at the extremity of the Mexican gulf, is not commonplace, but rather an Eastern city, and her origin is marked everywhere; in her cupolas, painted white, pink, and blue, her flat terraces, and ornaments mostly of a pyramidal form. But cities live longer than men, and I found Vera Cruz rejuvenated, younger and more animated than of yore.

A slight breath of French activity seems to have crossed the seas and to pervade everything. The houses are freshly painted, the steeples whitewashed, cupolas enamelled, and new blocks of houses and monuments meet the eye in all directions. The square, which was formerly squalid and intersected by water-courses, is now a charming place, paved with marble and planted with trees, in which squirrels and ouertitis gambol and play the

whole day long. The centre is occupied by a fountain, and the sides by arcades, giving access to magnificent *cafés*, beautiful shops, the Cathedral and the Town Hall inlaid with gleaming tiles.

In the day-time the shade is deep and the air cool, whilst in the evening numerous loungers and fair women, their hair chequered with phosphorescent *cucuyos*, fill the green walks, and give it the appearance of a huge hot-house. Vera Cruz, to those who are used to its climate, is a very pleasant abode, and though in some respects not so desirable as many European cities, life here, on account of the great heat, is easier, fuller, more satisfying. Wines are not dearer than in Paris; fish is both plentiful and excellent; tropical fruit of every kind is to be found in the market, as well as all the feathered tribe, varying from the laughing-bird and the parrot to the beautiful red and green Aras of Tabasco. Add to this the constant incoming and outgoing of every nation in the universe, eliciting a daily interchange of news with the outer world, and in a sense annihilating the distance which divides you from the mother country. Then, too, there is the Gulf with its blue waters, tempting to the most delightful dives man ever had; the jetty, which, insignificant though it be, is none the less a favourite resort, where in the evening people go for a little fresh air, beneath a magnificent canopied sky; and where in the day they can watch on the horizon the white sail disappearing out of sight. Picture to yourself this marvellous sky, filled with innumerable noisy sea-birds and small black vultures dotting it at a dizzy height, whilst far below, hoary, venerable pelicans, quite at home in the harbour, from long habit seem to spend their lives in diving and rising solemnly, then come and perch on the Custom House flag, with a grotesque kind of dignity, as though conscious of having fully done what was expected of them.

But the great feature about Vera Cruz is the innumerable

flights of black vultures, which fill the streets, and cover every roof and pinnacle. They are so tame as to be scarcely disturbed by the passers-by, and when servants throw out house refuse, there follows a general rush and a fearful fight, in which dogs take part, without, however, always getting the best of it. These dogs, like those of Constantinople, are the ædiles of both town and country, which without them would be intolerable.

Beyond Mexico Gate, a fine public walk, planted with large cocoa-trees, leads to a suburb which has within the last few years grown into a little town; it is the great rendezvous for sailors and coolies who come to dance and flirt with the damsels of the place, and the evening is generally wound up with a hot dispute with their less favoured companions.

The coast along the Atlantic is a vast sandy plain, diversified by marshes peopled with herons, wild ducks, iguanas, and serpents, which are almost impervious from thickets of aromatic shrubs and wild flowers, in the midst of which tower magnificent trees; but the sound of no voice ever breaks on this wilderness in which lurks the *malaria*, save the hoarse cry of a wild animal, the passing of an eagle-fisher, or the whirling of a vulture in quest of some easy prey.

The journey from Vera Cruz to Mexico is now performed by railway, which has replaced the once cumbrous diligence, and traffic has increased to such an extent that the English Railway Company is unable to convey inland goods which have come by sea.

We start on our journey with an escort, even now a necessary precaution, for five-and-twenty years have not modified the manners of the natives, and highway robbers are still a flourishing institution in Mexico.

Pressing westward, we go through the sandy, marshy zone, and leaving behind us Tejeria, Soledad, Paso Ancho, and Paso

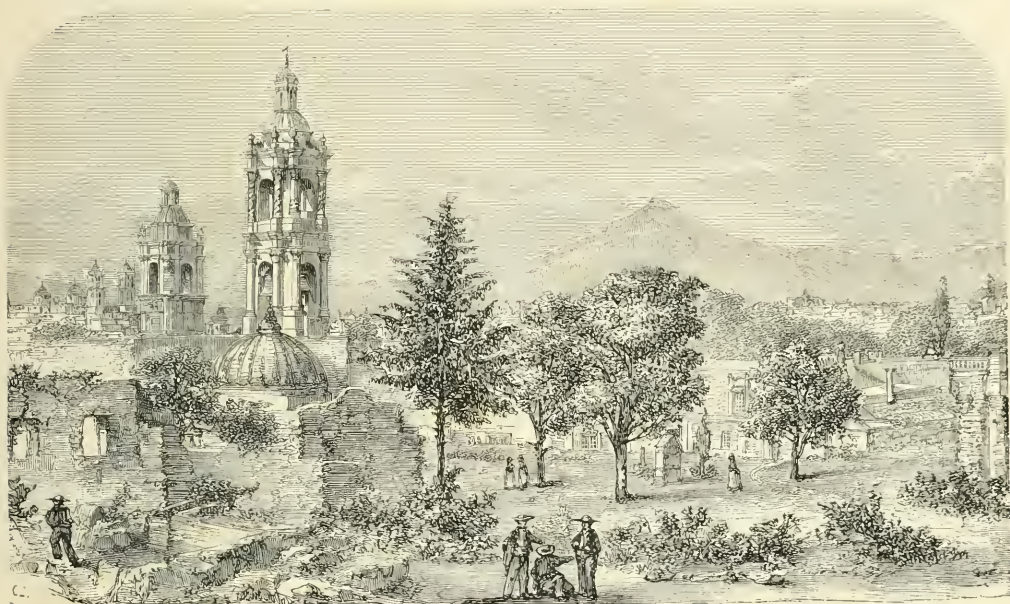
del Macho, we reach the famous Chiquihuite bridge, when a glorious region succeeds to the flat country and parched vegetation of the coast ; we continue to ascend through grander and grander scenery and more luxurious vegetation, having on our left the river Atoyac with its precipitous course, between deep ravines, and presently we come in sight of the iron viaduct, which is considered one of the best works on the line.

Still pressing upwards we reach the temperate zone, where we find coffee, tobacco, and banana plantations, spreading their broad green leaves under the shade of great trees which shelter them against the fierce heat of the sun ; while little houses, embowered in orange-groves and creepers, peep out coquettishly from leaf and foliage.

And now the grand outlines of the Sierra are about us, and at every bend of the road charming views unfold before our enraptured gaze ; a dazzling light colours all things with the richest tints, and Orizaba rears its magnificent head straight before us. Orizaba is, with the Popocatepetl, the highest mountain in Mexico ; its snowy peak is visible for many a mile at sea. At its foot may be seen the city of the same name, extending over a large area, with her numerous and once gorgeous churches, now falling into decay, amidst a vast plateau, circled by mighty mountains, once gleaming with volcanic fires and grand summits. Mills and factories, greatly on the increase, are worked by water-power, which is brought by aqueducts or mountain torrents.

After Orizaba, the road becomes very steep ; we enter the gorges of Infiernillo (small hell), where, along roads coasting deep ravines and unfathomable precipices, spanned by stupendous bridges, we reach Maltrata, where the train stops to change engines, when we ascend the heights, or *cumbres*, leading to the plateau.

And now the road opens out in long windings, rounding the steepest declivities ; bridges and tunnels succeed each other with dazzling rapidity, and the huge engine puffs and hisses, sending out long, curling volumes of white smoke over the most glorious landscape ; and our journey, which has lasted three hours, brings us to Esperanza, at an elevation of some



VIEW OF PUEBLA, TAKEN FROM ALTO.

1,200 metres,* and here we breakfast at an excellent buffet. After Esperanza, the country becomes a dreary, monotonous, dusty plain, contrasting painfully with the brilliant colouring of the warm zone ; not a tree is to be seen, hardly any vegetation ; some rare fields of stunted maize and wheat, a few meagre cactuses, with here and there a white hacienda, are the only indications that this forlorn region is not wholly uninhabited. Nevertheless, the monotony of this immense plain is relieved by the grand outline of mountains which bound the horizon,

* 3,901 feet.

and the sand mounds, which are visible everywhere, give the landscape a peculiar and somewhat severe aspect.

The railway, strange to say, has deprived this region of its few inhabitants, and steam has done away with the *arriero* and the long lines of heavy carts, panting mules, and muleteers in picturesque costumes, and the tinkling bells of *madinas* (mules heading the trains) are no more.

Then, also, these dusty roads were enlivened by the presence of small cottages, whence the cheerful hand-clapping of *tortilleros* reminded the hungry traveller that here his honest hunger might be appeased, during which the muleteer would ogle or distribute somewhat questionable compliments among the belles of the district; all is gone, even to the *meson*, in whose vast courtyard weary mules were put up for the night. The cottage has left no trace behind, the walls of the *meson* are a mass of ruins, and the courtyard deserted.

And now we travel in a north-west direction; we pass Huamantla, round Malinche, and leave Puebla some twenty leagues on our left, and crossing Apizaco we reach the Llanos of Apam, famed for its *pulque*, or Mexican wine, which is made of the juice of aloes (*Agave Americana*), to be found everywhere; but Apam pulque is as superior to other pulque as Chambertin is superior to ordinary claret. Aloe plantations are everywhere to be seen, and at each station a huge train calls daily for the casks full of the liquor so dear to Mexicans. This intoxicating beverage is not tempting in appearance, for it is yellowish, thick and stringy, with a most repulsive smell, yet when a taste for it has been acquired even Europeans drink it with pleasure after a day's trip. Here I am reminded how much the railway has destroyed the picturesqueness of the road. If in former times the traveller went over the ground at a slower pace, he had leisure to linger over the plain, admire the mountain round which the

railway now twines, to stop at Amozoc, a time-honoured haunt of brigands ; and though he missed Tlascala, the faithful ally of Cortez, and the hereditary enemy of Mexico, he had the opportunity of visiting Puebla de los Angeles, which lies at the very foot of great Malintzi or Malinche, faced by the snowy peaks of Iztaccihuatl and Popocatepetl.

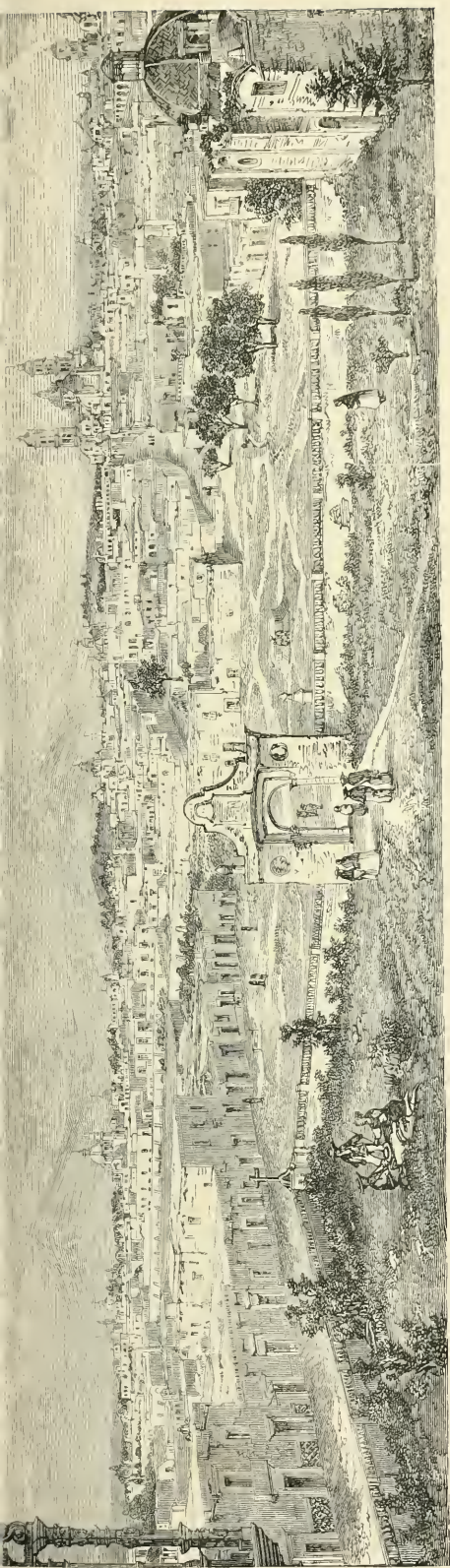
The city of Puebla de los Angeles was founded by the Spaniards soon after the conquest, on the site of an insignificant village a few miles east of Cholula. After Mexico, which it rivals by the beauty of its edifices, it is the most important city of New Spain. Like ancient Cholula, she is remarkable for the number and the magnificence of her sacred buildings, the multitude of her priests, and the pomp of her religious ceremonies, and her cathedral, in an architectural point of view, ranks as high as that of Mexico, whilst her treasures are perhaps even more considerable than those of her rival—her grand chandelier of massive silver having alone cost £14,000. The innumerable steeples of a hundred churches, and the gleaming cupolas, give a remarkable character to the panorama of this city, which has sustained many a siege, while her last defence under Ortega was simply heroic.

In the time of the diligence the road led to ancient *Cholula*, and the traveller had the opportunity of visiting her pyramid, on which stands the temple dedicated to Quetzacoatl, "God of the air," who was pleased to dwell among men, and, during his visit in Cholula, which extended over twenty years, he taught the Toltecs the arts of peace, a better form of government, and a more spiritualised religion, in which the only sacrifices were the fruits and flowers of the season. It was in honour of this benevolent deity that this stupendous mound was erected. The date of its erection is unknown, for it was found there when the Aztecs entered the plateau ; but it has been variously ascribed

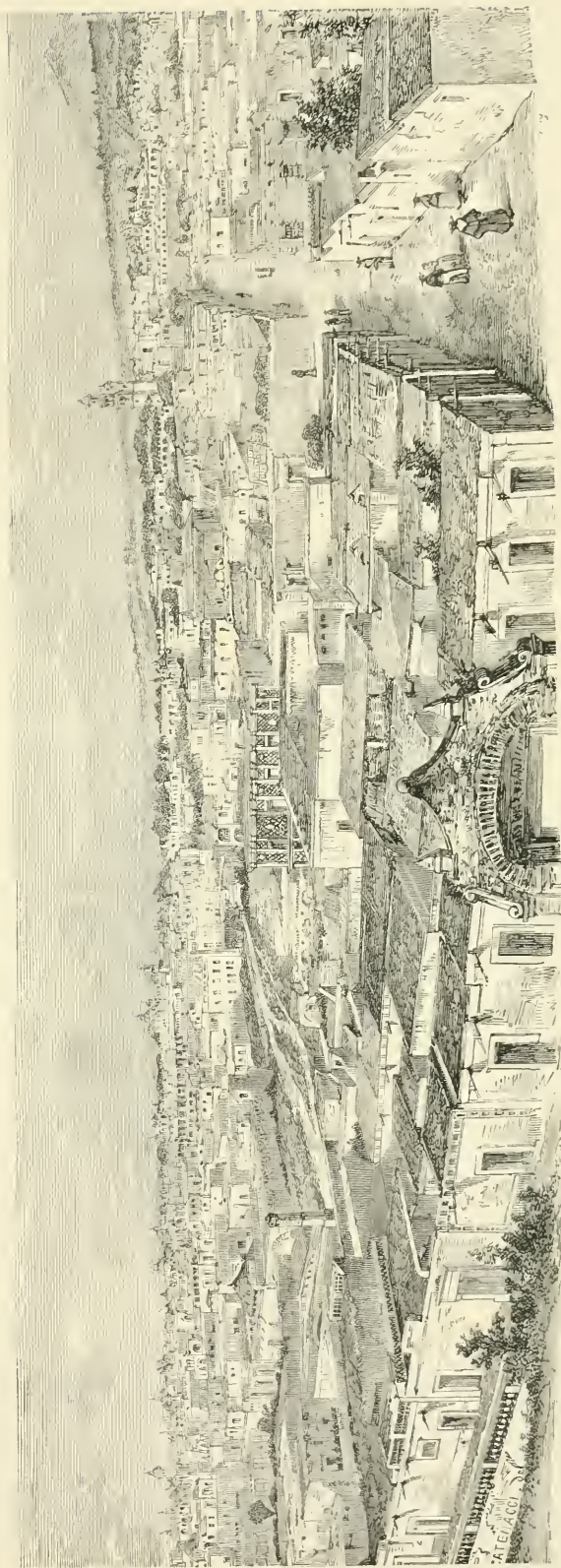
to the Olmecs, the Toltecs, and even to a race of giants, who wished to save themselves from another deluge. Clavigero observes very naturally, that the builders were rather stupid in taking so much trouble to raise an artificial mound, when they had within reach the highest mountains in the world where to take refuge in any such emergency.* It had the truncated, pyramidal form of the Mexican *teocalli* (temple), its four sides facing the cardinal points, and divided into the same number of terraces. The original outlines, however, have been effaced by the action of time, while the growth of shrubs and wild flowers, which cover its surface, gives it the appearance of one of those symmetrical elevations thrown up by Plutonic agency rather than the work of man. The height of this pyramid is 60 metres ;† its base, which is square, covers about forty-four acres, and the platform on its truncated summit embraces more than one. Cholula was of great antiquity, and was founded by the primitive race which occupied the land before the Aztecs. At the time of the conquest it was one of the most populous and flourishing cities of New Spain. “Nothing could be more grand than the view which met the eye from the truncated summit of the pyramid. Towards the north stretched the bold barrier of porphyry rock which nature has reared round the valley of Mexico, with the huge Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl standing like two sentinels to guard the entrance of this enchanted region. Far away to the south was seen the conical head of Orizaba soaring high into the clouds, and nearer, the barren, though beautifully shaped Sierra de Malinche, throwing its broad shadows over the plains of Tlascala. Three of these volcanoes, higher than the highest peak in Europe, and shrouded in snows which never melt under

* Clavigero, “Hist. Antigua,” lib. II. p. 53.

† 199 feet.



PANORAMA OF PUEBLA.



PANORAMA OF PUEBLA.

the fierce sun of the tropics, at the foot of the spectator the sacred city of Cholula, with its bright towers and pinnacles sparkling in the sun, reposing amidst gardens and verdant groves. Such was the magnificent prospect which met the eye of the conquerors, and may still, with slight change, meet that of the modern traveller, as he stands on the broad plateau of the pyramid and his eye wanders over the fairest portion of the beautiful plateau of Puebla." *

Cholula was the holy city of Anahuac, the Mecca, Jerusalem, and Rome of the Indians; in it the kindred races had temples of their own, and ministers for the service of the deity to whom they were consecrated. The sanctity of the place brought pilgrims from the furthest corners of Anahuac, who came to offer up their devotions at the shrine of Quetzacoatl and other divinities. Here Quetzacoatl had dwelt, and on his departure for the countries of the East, he had bidden his followers to keep fast his teaching, promising that he and his descendants would return, to reign again over them. This remarkable legend, which was popular with all the Indian tribes, was one of the most powerful auxiliaries of the Spanish conquerors, in whom the simple Indians thought they recognised the lofty stature, noble mien, clear complexion, and blue eyes, of the deity they had so long expected.

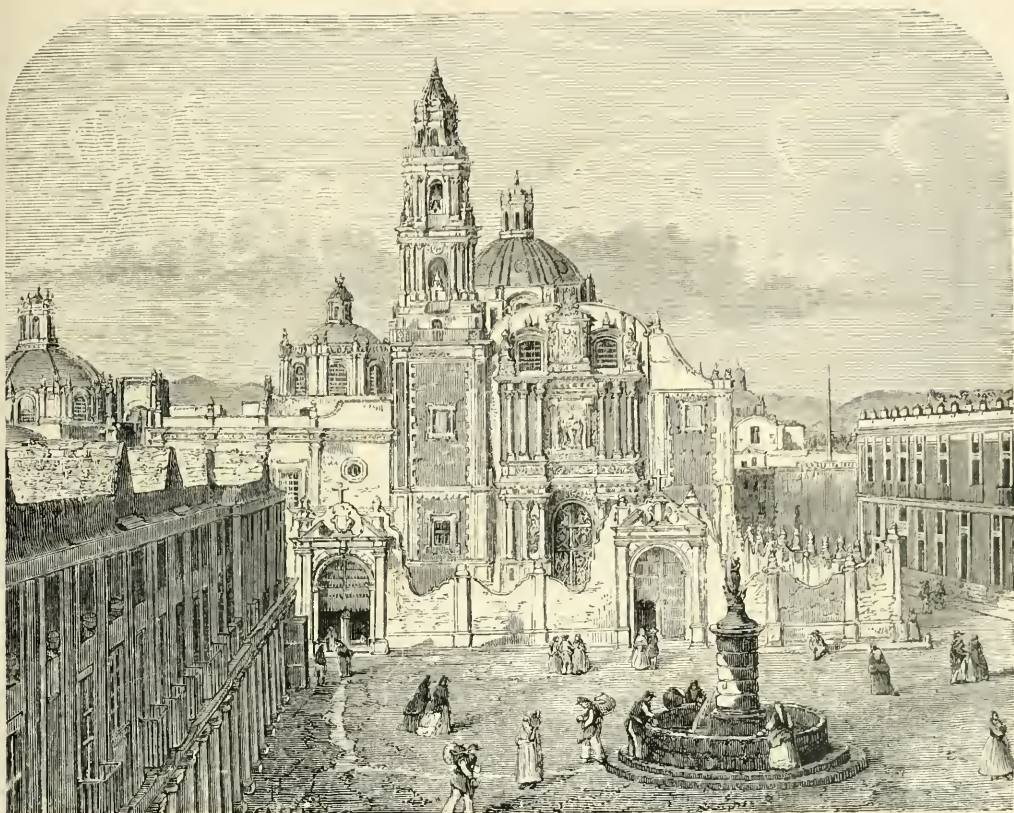
But talking of Cholula has made us forget that the train is going to start: the guards, hurrying in every direction to look for us, summon us into our carriages, the signal is given, and we speed away.

And now we notice on the platform of every station, detachments of soldiers, with large felt hats, trimmed with silver ribbons and tassels, whilst their horses, ready saddled, are stationed close by. In spite of their baggy trousers and slouching

* Prescott, "Hist. of the Conquest," vol. II. p. 8.

hats, these men have a military bearing, which shows them to be a picked body of troops, and in fact they are the "rural guard," lately formed, but already of the greatest service; thanks to their vigilant intelligence, the country is almost safe. This guard is recruited among the class described as "having no occupation and no permanent abode," and the Government gave proof of its sagacity when it availed itself of this turbulent element, which after having been the scourge of the country, now keeps it quiet. It is a case of setting a thief to catch a thief; for the "rural," acquainted for twenty miles round with all the "old customers," whose accomplice he used to be, knows better than any one how to track an escaped convict, or discover a secret haunt; and thanks to telegraphs and railroads, *pronunciamientos* have gone out of fashion, nipped in the bud before they are given time to assume any large proportions.

From Apam, where we got out to look at the view, we proceed to Palma; then Otumba, where Cortez, a few days after his evacuation of Mexico, obtained a great victory over the Aztecs, in which their chief was slain; and leaving Teotihuacan with its pyramids on the left, we reach Mexico and St. Cosme Station.



CHURCH OF SAN DOMINGO. (*See p. 30.*)

CHAPTER II.

MEXICO.

Her New Appearance—Moral Transformation—Public Walks and Squares—
Suburbs—Railway—Monuments—Cathedral—S. Domingo—S. Francisco—
La Merced—Hats à la S. Basilio—Suppression of Religious Orders.

MEXICO has undergone a still greater change than Vera Cruz. The large square, which used to be ill-paved and empty, has become a fine garden, planted with eucalyptus trees, which have grown wonderfully during the last twelve years, some measuring seven feet in girth and over 100 feet in height. Beneath the shade of these beautiful trees stretch beautiful gardens and green turf, whilst the centre is occupied by the Zocalo, a pavilion, in

which every evening very fair concerts are given, attended by the Mexican society.

Spacious houses in modern style have been constructed at different points of the city; new districts have arisen on the site once occupied by convents; pretty squares are distributed about, and the Paseo Nuevo, which was to extend as far as Chapultepec, is one which the proudest cities in the world might envy. But will it ever be completed? At present, it only reaches the imposing monument erected in honour of Christopher Columbus, which every Frenchman should admire as coming from Paris and the work of a Frenchman. The immediate area round Mexico has been completely transformed by lines of railroad and tramways; in places once occupied by fetid water or marshy ground, pretty villas and flower gardens are now to be seen, whilst on the other side of the Paseo, to the right and left of S. Cosme, the smaller suburbs are extending so fast that they will soon join the main city. Should Americans come—and a goodly number are here already—all this land, now almost valueless, would in a few years double and treble in price.

But what is still more remarkable is the moral transformation: a new life seems to animate Mexico: education, trade, industry, and public works, have received great development; security has increased, a public conscience has been awakened, ideas have become more liberal, change of power is now effected without disturbance, whilst formerly it was preceded, accompanied and followed by the ever-recurring *pronunciamentos*; a feeling of good-fellowship begins to penetrate all classes, and Government House is in a true sense the House of the people, being filled from early morning by friends, employés, or petitioners. Every one is free to come and go, without let or hindrance, all are received by the Governor without having to ask an audience, and every one is welcomed with the greatest affability,

as I can from personal experience amply testify. To give an idea how far the spirit of patriotism was roused by the war of intervention, I will quote the words of a deputy, who, on my preliminary bill being submitted to Congress, which had been agreed to between the Government and myself respecting my excavations and their export, rushed into the tribune to speak against its adoption. "Gentlemen," he cried, "I feel savage, beside myself, almost idiotic, when the interests of our country are at stake." The speaker was right in his description of himself, for the removal of a few fragments from the soil of the Republic was not deserving of such an outburst.

But it is the privilege of the young ever to exaggerate, and Mexico is as yet in her youth. The public press is just started, and there are but two independent papers, the admirably conducted Republican *Moniteur* and the *Nineteenth Century*, which give any profits. All the others are paid by the Government, are short-lived, and disappear one after another, to reappear under new names and take up with a different party. And yet there is no lack of talent, the drawback is in the difficulty of communications. The heavy postal charges (a letter from one village to another costs one shilling), the ignorance and indifference of the masses about political events, are the main causes which prevent any newspaper from succeeding. The only interest evinced in politics is at the time of the elections, and even in these, Mexicans take very little interest, knowing beforehand that it will not much matter to them, and that their burden will hardly be made lighter. It may be safely predicted that the Indians will not be roused from their apathy until they are better educated, and until they discover that they have a direct interest in mixing in politics—for which they are eminently qualified—and if their vast majority be considered, they would undoubtedly contribute a large contingent, whilst their industry, their intelligent quickness

to seize everything, coupled with a natural talent of adaptation, would soon raise them to the foremost ranks in the army, politics, the bar and science, as may even now be seen in the few who have had the privilege of education; nor would this be difficult, for they now stand on a perfect footing of equality with the Mexicans, for unlike most conquerors, jealous to preserve their nationality, the modern Mexicans repudiate their Spanish descent and are proud to call themselves Indians. But what is to be the outcome of it all? Will the Indian, forgetting his humble and thrifty aspirations, thirst, like the Mexican, after Government employment, which, whilst it keeps him idle, unfits him for commercial and industrious pursuits? He has lived hitherto under laws harsh and severe for him alone; is there no fear that once free, he will plunge into the vices of freed men, rather than put on the virtues of civilised people? If we are to borrow our experience from the past, this would be the case, since when, shortly after the conquest, he lived under milder laws, the effect was to sink him into such an appalling condition of moral depravity as to move the good Franciscan monk Sahagun to say of him: "We ought not perhaps to be surprised at finding among them the usual shortcomings which belong to their country, since the Spaniards who live here, and especially the American born, are in no way better than the Indians. Even the natives of Spain, after a few years in this country, are quite altered, and I have always ascribed this change to a difference of climate and latitude. It is humiliating to our feelings as Christians," exclaims Sahagun, "to reflect that the Indians of olden time, wise in their generation, knew how to remedy evils peculiar to the soil, by means of practices which were their safeguard, whereas we succumb to our evil propensities; the result of which is that we see a new generation, Indian as well as Spanish, rising around us, which it is difficult to manage or to save. Parents have not

that authority they ought to have over their offspring to guard them against their natural proclivities. The ancient dwellers of this soil were far better inspired when they abandoned the education of their children to public authority, which replaced paternal rights. Unfortunately this method was tainted by idolatrous and superstitious practices; but were these to be eliminated and the ancient method introduced afresh among the Indo-Spanish people, a great public good would undoubtedly follow, which would relieve the Government of many difficulties now pressing upon it. As it is we hardly know how to deal with those reared in our schools, who, finding themselves no longer checked by the fear and discipline of former, nor the severity of pagan times, do not care to learn and are indifferent to admonition; very different in this respect from their Aztec forefathers. At first, following their ancient practice, which placed the youth of both sexes in buildings within the enclosure of their temples, in which they were drilled in monastic discipline, and taught to reverence their gods and obey the laws of their country, we tried to bring them up in our establishments, and to this end we collected them in buildings adjoining our houses, in which they were accustomed to rise in the middle of the night to sing the matins of Our Lady, and recite the 'Hours' at early dawn; they were also required to beat themselves with stripes and to spend some time of the day in mental exercises, but as they were not compelled as in pagan times to do any manual labour, as their natural aspirations seemed to demand, and as moreover they were better fed and more mildly treated than their student ancestors, they soon learnt and fell into evil ways. We also directed our attention to the women to see whether it were possible to place them in convents, as in heathen times, and with this end in view we made them Christian nuns, and imposed on them perpetual vows; convents and retreats were erected, in

which they were taught their religious duties and the art of reading and writing. Such as had shown themselves proficient in these pursuits and were possessed besides of becoming dignity and decorum, were chosen to preside over these establishments as guides and teachers of Christianity and purity of life.* At first we fondly hoped, as in the men's case, that they would become worthy and spotless nuns, but we were mistaken, experience having shown that, for the present at least, they were incapable of so much perfection, and convents and conventicles had to be abolished, and we have to confess that the time has not yet come for repeating the experiment."

The passage just quoted is suggestive of many things.

A deplorable change for the worse is already observable in the character of the Indians of Tabasco and Chiapas since the Suffrage Bill, which by making them partly independent of the whites, has also made them idle, insolent, treacherous, and depraved. A sad look-out for times to come. But even granting that all happens for the best, is there much probability that the Indian will have time to develop his natural resources before the Anglo-Saxon invasion shall have confined him for ever to the lower ranks in the social scale?

However that may be, Mexico, although bent on progress, seems only to receive her notions second-hand. Eager for action, every new idea or advance which has received a trial with other nations, is sure to be promptly adopted, without any inquiry whether it is applicable, suitable, or useful, among a people wholly unprepared to receive them; and this total impossibility of legislating for half savages and illiterate people made a deputy say one day to me: "We have a constitution fit for angels, whereas we ought to have one fit for asses."

* Sahagun, "Hist. de Nueva España," lib. x. cap. xxvii.

What happens? The Mexicans at present enjoy perfect liberty, which they use to stop the action of the Government, and as each department is entirely independent, the lowest clerk is able to stop the whole machinery. Most Mexicans have, or wish to have, Government employment, leaving to foreigners the development of their national wealth; banking, trade, and the working of their rich mines are, with few exceptions, in the hands of Spaniards, French, English, and Americans. The latter are swarming in; and, save Vera Cruz, all the railways are American.

Very few Mexicans have been found willing to risk their capital in these important enterprises, being satisfied with receiving a premium, or joining the companies as employés. What will happen? It would be a strange and novel phenomenon to see a superior (?) race disappearing before an inferior one. Be that as it may, it is certain that on the day when the Anglo-Americans shall be able to dispense with the services of the Mexican, they will not scruple to thrust him aside, careful however to keep the Indians of the Highlands, now a docile, frugal, hard-working people, whom they will use for mining and agricultural purposes, as well as for the construction of railways. But this is not yet. The absorption will come, however—gradually, silent, peaceful—a slow, easy death, but a sure death nevertheless.

Yet it would be a matter for regret that this attractive people, open to every new idea of progress, eager to distinguish themselves, as shown a hundred times in the defence of their liberties, should be swallowed up by the Saxon element. The “*Timeo Danaos dona ferentes*” is surely applicable here, and Mexico should beware of her powerful neighbour—*Caveant Consules*.

Mexico has a great wealth of monuments, palatial houses, and churches, the finest of which is the Cathedral, occupying

the northern side of the Place d'Armes, with the Palace to the east, the Houses of Parliament to the south, and the Portal de las Damas on the western side. It was erected on the site of the sumptuous temple dedicated to *Huitzilopochtli*, the war god and the patron deity of the Aztecs, whose altars reeked with the blood of human hecatombs in every city of the empire. The first stone for this church was laid in the reign of Philip II., and the canonicate of Archbishop Pedro Moya de Contreras. The foundations, which extended as far as the north side of the old temple, embracing the whole space now taken up by the courts, were carried on under the energetic supervision of Alonzo Perez de Castañeda. The work required for these foundations, owing to the unsteady, marshy nature of the soil, was so enormous that in 1615 the walls only rose to some twenty feet above the ground. Philip III., on being informed of the difficulties which retarded the work begun by his father, sent a plan drawn by his own architect, which was to simplify the original one, and accelerate the completion of the church.

The principal sacristy was finished in 1623; the vaults in the middle nave were completed between 1623 and 1665. In 1667, the interior of the Cathedral being quite finished, the inauguration took place. The choir, however, was only completed in 1730, when the rich and marvellous balustrade, which divides the choir from the sanctuary, executed by Macao, was put up. This balustrade, composed of bronze and silver, which has all the appearance of burnished gold, is most striking in its general effect.

The expenses of this church (completed in 1791) amounted to 2,446,000 piastres, or £489,200. Seen from the square, the edifice has the imposing appearance of churches of the latter portion of the sixteenth century. The façade, though simple, is very imposing, and contrasts favourably with the other sacred

edifices in the city ; three doors intervene between Doric columns and open into the middle and lateral naves. Over the main door two stories superimposed and ornamented with Doric and Corinthian pilasters, support a most elegant steeple, crowned by three statues, representing the theological virtues. On each side, towers, severe in design, and topped by cupolas, rise to the height of 78 metres.* The interior is one mass of gold. The choir, which is immense, occupies the principal nave, and, by means of a costly composite gallery, is made to join the main altar, designed after St. Peter's in Rome. The two lateral naves, destined for the congregation, have no choir or seats of any kind, and Mexican ladies, who are very regular in their attendance at church, are satisfied with kneeling or sitting on the damp stones of the pavement, whether from zeal or because it would not be "good form" not to do so, remains doubtful, whereas it is quite certain that their delicate constitution demands a less dangerous practice. The few men who are ever seen in the interior of a church generally stand ; most, however, remain outside talking to one another, and waiting for the ladies, who on coming out reward them for their patience by a bewitching look or a graceful inclination of the head.

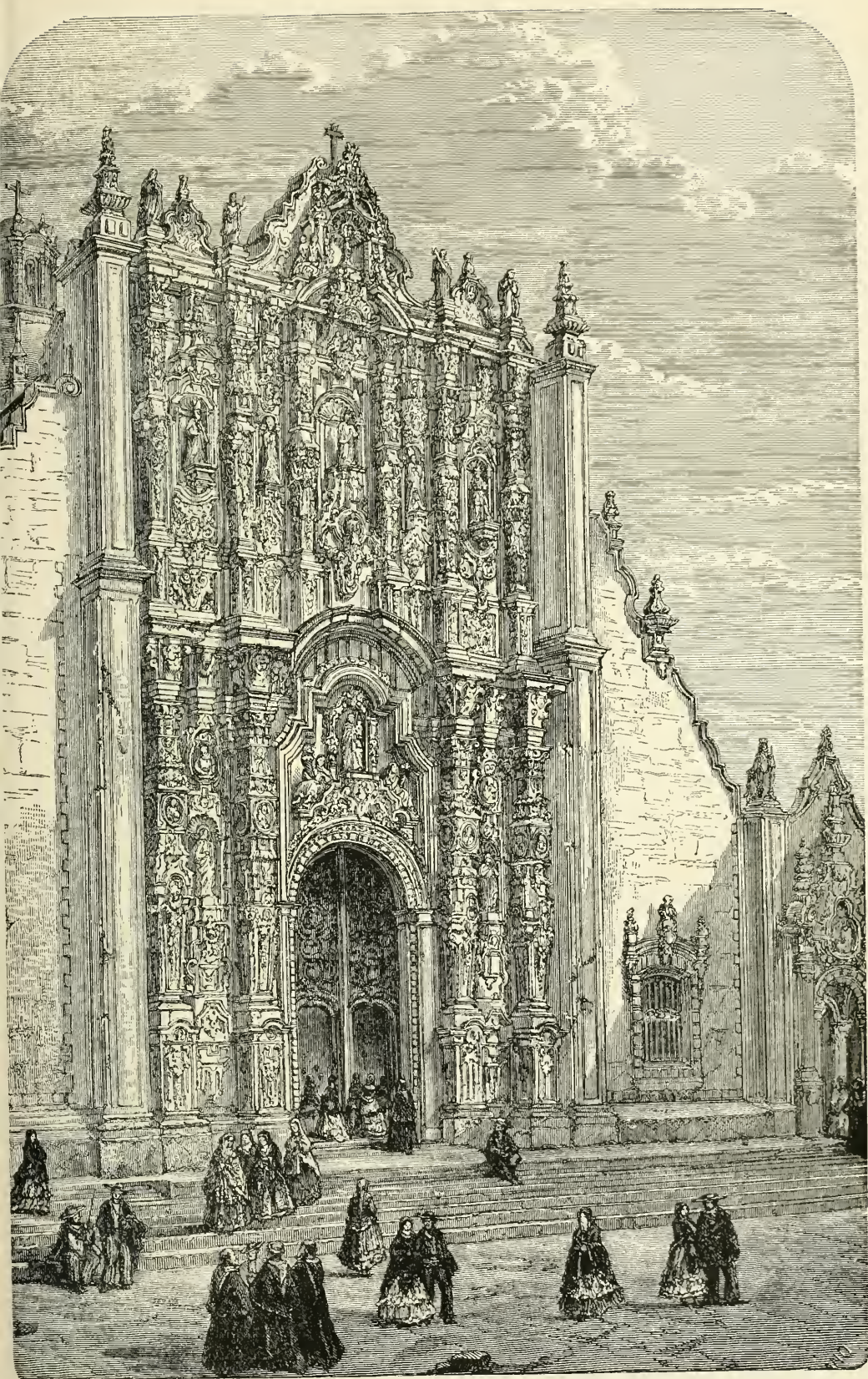
Among the works of art possessed by the Cathedral, may be mentioned a small picture by Murillo, known as the "Virgin of Belen," not a good specimen of the great master. The priests attached to the church look upon it, however, as their most precious jewel ; to this may be added the "Assumption of the Virgin," of massive gold, weighing 1,116 ounces ; a silver lamp hanging before the sanctuary, which cost £16,000 : the tabernacle of massive silver valued at £32,000, besides diamonds, rubies, emeralds, amethysts, pearls, and sapphires in shoals, and a vast

* 247 feet.

quantity of gold and silver vases, representing fabulous sums of money.

On the wall of the left tower to the west, may be seen the famous Aztec calendar, found on the 17th December, 1700, whilst the new esplanade of Impedradillo was being constructed. By order of the Viceroy it was carefully encased and preserved in the steeple wall, and has proved to be one of the most precious monuments of Indian antiquity. Antonio de Gama, in a masterly treatise, explained the objects to which it was devoted, and poured a flood of light on the astronomical science of the Aborigines and their mythology. His work has been criticised, however, by Valentine of New York, and both are impugned by Chavero of Mexico, whilst others pass a severe judgment on all three. So true is it, that archæological, like other questions, are ever open to hot dispute.

The Sagrario is a huge chapel close to the Cathedral, used for marriages, christenings, and burial services. The host is exposed at all times on the altar for the veneration of the faithful. The Sagrario deserves a passing note, for though vicious in taste, it has such a wealth of ornamentation and sculpture, as to make one forget the defects of its style considered as a whole. It is from the Sagrario that the last sacrament used to be carried to comfort the rich and powerful, in a gilt carriage, or beneath a gorgeous dais, amidst a cortège of priests, who preceded and followed it, its presence being announced by the ringing of a silver bell. At its approach the traffic and movement of the town was suspended; every one, no matter the state of the weather, humbly knelt down in dust or mud; all were expected to join the procession and accompany the host to the house of the dying; the viceroy himself was not exempted from this formality, and chroniclers tell us that many were the times when he was thus compelled to head the marching column.



EL SAGRARIO.

But that was in the good old time, which I am old enough to have seen, when priests and monks, their heads covered with huge hats, *à la* Don Basilio, filled the streets with their portly, dignified figures, their faces ever open to a smile. That time has gone by; monks and priests, shorn of their dress and privileges, have disappeared and become private citizens. The Church on that occasion was not proceeded against by slow degrees; the Government, feeling at home in a country peculiarly religious and Catholic, decreed on the same day the suppression of all religious communities, the confiscation of their goods, and the disestablishment of the Church, and though a large majority mildly protested, nobody cared; not so the monks and priests, who whirled anathemas and fulminated the *excommunicatio maxima* against whomsoever should lend a hand to the demolition of the convents—nay, even against those who would be found bold enough to pass through the streets thus opened on ecclesiastical property. The Leperos, however, engaged in these demolitions, had recourse to an ingenious device to nullify the spiritual thunderbolts of their ancient patrons. They bedizened themselves with amulets, scapularies, and chaplets as a protection against the wiles of the devil, and thus attired they proceeded gaily to the destruction of cell and chapel, whilst weeping dueñas, indignant at being witnesses of such sacrilege, poured out their unavailing supplications.

The excitement lasted but a week, and the Leperos thought so little of it that they did not refrain from bearing away to their housewives the wainscoting of the religious houses, and the newly made streets were used like any others.

But it will be asked, what of the monks? Most have become citizens and taken wives, and are now heads of families; some have gone into exile; whilst others are business men. I have even met a few, who, having turned Protestants, were employed

as guides by the Boston and New York Biblical Missions. As for the clergy, contrary to the received opinion that on being deprived of their emoluments and tithes they would be richer than before, they have become as poor as their vows require, as humble as they profess, reading their services as heretofore to crowded congregations, and every one is or seems to be satisfied.

But to return to our edifices. The Church and Convent of S. Domingo (Dominick) stands in Custom House Square, blocked up at all times by carriages, carts, mules, and a motley crowd. At this point, when *pronunciamentos* were the rule, rebels used to take their stand, and sheltered behind the high steeples of the church, shot at their fellow-citizens lodged on the azoteas (flat roofs) of the neighbouring houses. They did their work so often and so well that the desolation of these cloisters is complete. The pictures which once were their chief ornament are mostly in holes, and the walls blackened with shot and powder. S. Domingo has the hardly enviable privilege of having been the seat of the Inquisition. Here, in 1646, the terrible tribunal celebrated its first *auto-da-fê*, when forty-eight persons were burnt at the stake. These human sacrifices, which were only abolished at the beginning of this century, were not better than the revolting practices of the Aztecs, save that Catholic priests were content to burn their victims without eating them, but to make up for this they branded them with eternal infamy.

The Convent of S. Francisco, which at one time extended over fifteen acres of ground, is situated between the street bearing the same name and S. Juan de Latran y Zuleta Street. It is intersected by beautiful cloisters, courts, and gardens, and was formerly the most important as well as the richest convent in Mexico : having two churches, the interiors of which were adorned

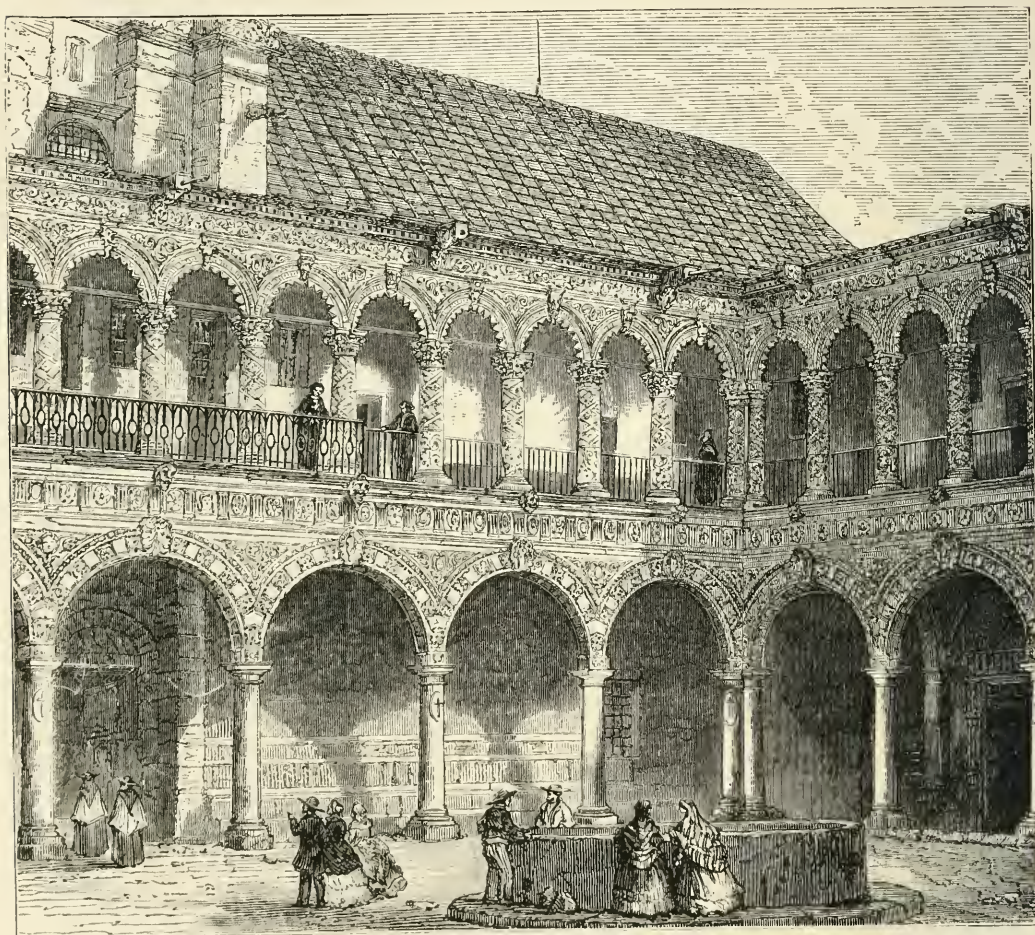
with gigantic altars of finely-carved gilt wood ; three exquisite chapels, and elegant cloisters covered with pictures, thus forming one of the most remarkable monuments in Mexico. But alas ! all that wealth is gone, the ruthless hand of democracy has pulled down cell and chapel ; streets run in places once occupied by its altars ; its flower-beds are turned into a nursery-garden, and its silent cells are tenanted by poor families, whose women and children fill the air with their shrill and discordant voices. All that remains is the façade, with its magnificent gate—a curious mixture of Renaissance pilasters, covered with figures in high relief, surmounted with composite capitals, divided by niches adorned with statues, besides a marvellous wealth of ornamentation, not in the best taste, but highly finished. Their chief interest, however, lies in their being the work of the Indians, rather than the production of a Spanish chisel. Indians, according to Mendieta, were no contemptible artists ; “with tools made of tin and copper, they could cut not only metals, but the hardest substances. They carved their vessels of gold and silver, with their metallic chisels, in a very delicate manner. They imitated the figures of animals, and could mix the metals in such a manner, that the feathers of a bird, or the scales of a fish, should be alternately of gold and silver.”

They worked the various stones and alabasters with *guijarros* (a tool made of silex and flint), in the construction of their public buildings, entrances and angles of which were frequently ornamented with images, sometimes of their fantastic and hideous deities. Sculptured images were so numerous, that the foundations of the Cathedral in the Plaza Mayor are said to be entirely composed of them.* They also painted from nature, birds, fish, and landscape, and after their conversion to Christianity, says

* Geronimo Mendieta, *Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana*, lib. iv. chap. xii.

Mendieta, they reproduced admirably our images and reredos from Flanders and Italy.

The religion of the Aztecs imposed upon their followers certain forms, in their delineation of the human figure, or the



CLOISTER OF THE CONVENT OF LA MERCED.

personification of the Deity, which they were not permitted to discard; this explains why we find so many rude images side by side with the most exquisite work of ornamentation.

But to return. No one would stop to look at the Convent de la *Merced* were it not for its cloisters, the finest in Mexico;

they are composed of white, slender columns, in Moorish style, with indented arches, forming galleries which surround a paved court, the centre of which is occupied by an insignificant fountain.

The Convent stands in the middle of a densely populated suburb, forming a striking contrast to the tumult and hubbub outside. The feeling of profound desolation which is felt at gazing on these walls is beyond description, for the silence is only broken in the rare intervals when an *aguador* comes to fill his *cantaros* and *chochocoles* (earthen pots and jars) at the fountain. The white picturesque tunic of the monks which relieved the solitude of these endless galleries has for ever disappeared, and now its vast passages only give access to empty cells.

The walls of the galleries are covered with innumerable pictures, the figures in which are of life-size, representing martyrs of the order of S. Domingo and its most celebrated saints. They are not pleasant to look at, presenting to the eye nothing but distortions, funeral piles and dislocations; all the tortures, in fact, which the perverted ingenuity of man has devised to harass his fellow-creatures. Among them, some are lifting to heaven their gory heads, whose blood is streaming down to their feet, whilst others are stretching out their freshly-stunted arms and calcined limbs. At no time can the priests of Huitzilopochtli have sanctioned more harrowing suffering, or consented, in their religious frenzy, to more revolting practices.

The Convent de la Merced used to possess a good library, and many precious manuscripts of Indian antiquity; but the superstitious ignorance of the monks allowed it to fall into decay, and documents of highest interest to the historian and archæologist were used as waste-paper or consigned to the flames.

The choir of this church had one hundred seats of carved oak, and was considered one of the finest in the world. The Government is converting the church into a library, which, when completed, is expected to be one of the finest monuments of the city.

Among buildings of public usefulness, the School of Mines, El Salto del Agua, Chapultepec Military College, the Art Academy, and the Museum may be mentioned.



MEXICAN MONKS.



EL SALTO DEL AGUA (FOUNTAIN).

CHAPTER III.

THE INDIANS.

El Salto del Agua—Netzahualcoyotl—Noche triste—Historical Jottings—Chapultepec — Indians — Chinampas — Legends — Anecdote — Mexican Museum—Tizoc's Stone, or Gladiator's Stone—Yoke and Sacrificial Stone—Holy War—Religious Cannibalism—American Copper.

EL SALTO DEL AGUA is the only monumental fountain in Mexico ; it stands in the centre of a low suburb removed from the chief thoroughfares, and terminates the aqueduct which brings from Chapultepec ("grasshopper's hill") an abundant supply of water to Mexico. El Salto del Agua is an oblong building, with a very mediocre façade ; a wide spread-eagle in the centre supports the escutcheon bearing the arms of the city. On each side twisted columns with Corinthian capitals bear two symbolical figures, representing Europe and America, besides eight half-broken vases.

According to historians of the conquest, El Salto del Agua, and the Aqueduct which it terminates, replaced the ancient aqueduct of Montezuma, constructed by Netzahualcoyotl, King of Tezcucó, between the years 1427 and 1440. At that time it was brought through an earthen pipe to the city, along a dyke constructed for the purpose, and that there might be no failure in so essential an article, a double course of pipes in stone and mortar was laid. In this way a column of water the size of a man's body was conducted into the heart of the capital, where it fed fountains and reservoirs of the principal mansions.*

Since the name of Netzahualcoyotl has been mentioned, it may not be out of place to give a brief account of a prince whose accomplishments, character, and adventurous life, would make him a fit hero for romance rather than the subject of sober history. He was descended from the Toltecs, of whom we shall speak later. He ruled over the Acolhuans or Tezcucans, as they were generally called, a nation of the same family as the Aztecs, whom it preceded on the plateau, and whom it rivalled in power and surpassed in intellectual activity. He was himself at once king, poet, philosopher, and lawgiver, and was a munificent patron of letters, and *Tezcucó* was, in his time, the meeting-place of all that was intelligent in Anahuac, as was Athens in the days of Pericles, Florence and Rome under the Medicis. Netzahualcoyotl held a conspicuous place among the bards of Anahuac, for the tender pathos of his verse, the elegance and rich colouring of his style, and the tinge of melancholy which pervades most of his writings. His large and enlightened mind could not accept the superstitions of his countrymen, still less the sanguinary rites of the Aztecs; his humane temper shrank

* Clavigero.

from their cruel rites, and he endeavoured to recall his people to the more pure and simple worship of their forefathers. But he shared the fate of men far in advance of their time, and had to yield before their ignorance and fanaticism, contenting himself with publicly avowing his faith and nobler conception of the deity. He built a temple in the usual pyramidal form, to the "*Unknown God, the Cause of Causes.*"

Though Netzahualcoyotl was of a benevolent disposition, he was strict in the administration of the laws, even against his own children; indeed, he put to death his two sons for having appropriated other people's booty. Many anecdotes are told of the benevolent interest he took in his subjects, amongst whom he delighted to wander in disguise, and, like Haroun-al-Raschid, entered freely in conversation with them, thus ascertaining their individual wants. His last days were spent in the pursuit of astronomical studies and the contemplation of the future life. He died full of days after a reign of nearly fifty years, during which he had freed his country from a foreign tyrant, breathed new life into the nation, renewed its ancient institutions, and seen it advancing towards a higher standard of civilisation; and he saw his end approach with the same serenity that he had shown alike in misfortune and in prosperity. Such is the very imperfect account of a prince who was the glory of his nation; whose muse, by turns, invited men to enjoy the passing hour, or bade them beware of the vanity of all earthly pleasures, teaching them to look beyond the grave for things that will endure.

But before we go on to Chapultepec, we must call at Tacuba, and visit the famous *Ahuahuate*, a kind of cypress, under whose shelter Cortez, on the night of July 1, 1520, came to rest his weary limbs and mourn over the cause which had so greatly imperilled his safety and that of his troops, as to make imperative the evacuation of Mexico, in which many of his most trusty



TREE OF THE NOCHE TRISTE, AT POPOTLAN.

veterans were sacrificed. The night was called on this account *Noche triste*, "Melancholy night."

But to explain. We will give a short sketch of the causes

which brought about this sad event, quoting largely from Father Duran, Ramirez, and Sahagun :

“ It was in the month of May, the Mexican *toxcall*, when it was common for the Aztecs to celebrate their great annual festival in honour of their war-god *Huitzilopochtli*, which was commemorated by sacrifice, religious songs and dances, in which all the nobility engaged, displaying their magnificent gala costumes, with their brilliant mantles of feather-work, sprinkled with precious stones, and their necks, arms, and legs ornamented with collars and bracelets of gold. Alvarado, whom Cortez had left as lieutenant of his forces, during his expedition against his formidable enemy, Narvaez, was now petitioned by the Indian caciques to be allowed to perform their rites. Alvarado acquiesced on condition that on this occasion there should be no human sacrifice, and that they should come without weapons ; he and his soldiers, meanwhile, attended as spectators, some of them taking station at the gates, as if by chance. They were all fully armed, but as this was usual, it excited no suspicion ; but as soon as the festival, which was held in the court of the great temple, had fairly begun, and the Mexicans were engrossed by the exciting movement of the dance, and their religious chants, Alvarado and his followers, at a concerted signal, rushed with drawn swords on their defenceless victims. Unprotected by armour or weapon of any kind, they were hewn down without resistance by their pitiless and bloodthirsty assailants. Some fled to the gates, but were thrust back by the pikes of the soldiers ; some were able to scale the walls ; others, penetrating the sanctuary of the temple, fell on the pavement and simulated death. The pavement ran with streams of blood, ‘like water in a heavy shower,’ and the ground was strewn with the mutilated limbs of the dead. The Spaniards, not content with slaughtering their victims, rifled them of their precious ornaments. On this sad

day were sacrificed more than six hundred men, the flower of the Mexican nobility ; not a family of note but had to mourn the loss of a near relation. The tidings of this horrible butchery filled the nation with stupefaction and dismay ; they could hardly believe their senses. Every feeling of long-smothered hostility and rancour now burst forth in a cry for vengeance. The respect for the person of their sovereign made them desist from further attempts to storm the fortress. But they threw up works around the Palace to prevent the Spaniards from getting out. They suspended the market, to preclude the possibility of their enemy obtaining supplies. This accomplished, they quietly sat down, waiting for the time when famine would deliver the hated foreigner into their hands. The situation of the Spaniards seemed desperate, when they were relieved from their gloomy apprehensions by the return of Cortez, who with his comrades had succeeded in utterly crushing Narvaez. It was not too soon : a few days more and the garrison must have surrendered from lack of provisions, and still more from want of water. Alvarado was subjected to a cross-examination by Cortez, who contented himself with administering some words of reproof, and ordering him to his post ; for the city again rose to arms. In this terrible strait, Cortez sent to the Aztec Emperor to request him to mediate with his subjects. Meanwhile the Spaniards endeavoured to effect a retreat out of a city thoroughly roused against them. This they accomplished under cover of a dark, drizzling night, after a fearful carnage and much bloodshed, lasting over several days ; when the Spanish troops, accompanied by their Tlascalan allies, abandoned a city which had been so lately the scene of their triumphs, and each soldier, loaded with as much gold and jewels as he could carry, made for the gates. All was hushed in silence ; no danger seeming to arrest their march, they were beginning to hope that a few hours would see them beyond the

missiles of the enemy. But, as they drew near the bridges of Tlascopan Street, they were assailed by thousands of Mexicans, and amidst a fearful tumult and destructive confusion, followed by shouts of impotent rage from the combatants and moans from the severely wounded, in which the best among the Spaniards lay buried in the murky waters of the canals, or fallen under the axes of the Mexicans, the Spanish leaders, followed by the disordered remnant of their troops, were allowed to defile to an adjacent village called *Popotla*, where Cortez, on beholding their thinned ranks and deplorable condition, gave vent to the anguish of his soul.

Cortez' fame has been much overrated ; he was fortunate rather than great, for he was powerfully assisted at the very outset by the friendly attitude of the Indians, who welcomed in him the Deliverer long foretold in their legends, who was to rescue them from the thralldom and heavy burdens imposed upon them by the Aztec monarchs, to enable them to carry on their warlike enterprises and policy of annexation. He was helped, moreover, by two intelligent interpreters, Aguilar and Marina, in his intercourse with the natives ; Marina proving subsequently a devoted friend, and a faithful and skilful negotiator with the Indians. It is equally certain that, from purely selfish motives of personal convenience and policy, as also to gratify the cruel rapacity of his followers, he not only allowed, but even ordered acts of bloodshed and treachery which must for ever stain his character. His courage cannot be doubted ; yet his conduct in the expedition to Honduras, his pusillanimity on his return, argue a poor politician ; whilst the revolting massacres at Cholula and Mexico sink into shade when compared with the murder of Guatemozin. Las Casas, who knew him well, calls him "that fellow ;" which term of reproach is more opprobrious than a worse epithet.

But these things have detained us too long already ; let us

now proceed to Chapultepec, one of the most delightful spots in the Mexican valley. Two roads, the Paseo Nuevo and the tramway, lead to it ; we will take the latter as shorter and cheaper, which, starting from the Place d'Armes, goes through Belen gate, and sets us down at the very entrance of the Castle. Chapultepec, "grasshopper hill," is a volcanic hill some 1,625 feet long, and 100 feet high, covered with luxurious vegetation, crowned with groves of cypresses, *ahuahuetes*, some of which are seventy-five feet in diameter, and seem to defy the decay of ages.*

The view from the windows of the Palace, which stands on the top of the hill, embracing the valley of Mexico, is one of the finest in the world. In the highly rarefied atmosphere of these upper regions, even distant objects have a brilliancy of colouring and a distinctness of outline which enables one to take in the details of this marvellous panorama, studded with towns and hamlets, the white walls of which, together with the tops of porphyry rocks, glimmer in the rays of the sun. Stretching far away at their feet are seen noble forests of oak, sycamore, and cedar, whilst beyond, cultivated fields, beautiful gardens, lakes, and lagoons, girdle the valley around. Looking towards Mexico, the spectator has behind him the low chain de las Cruces ; on his right, to the south, Pedregal and the Ajuscean hills ; before him, to the east, the grand snowy tops of Popocatepetl, "the hill of smoke," and Iztaccihuatl, "White Woman," from its bright robe of snow ; on his left to the north, Cerro Gordo, and nearer, the Sierra Guadalupe, where stands the most celebrated sanctuary of Mexico, dedicated to the Virgin.

This chapel rises on the site once occupied by the famous temple of Toci—the mother of a god—whose altars were thronged

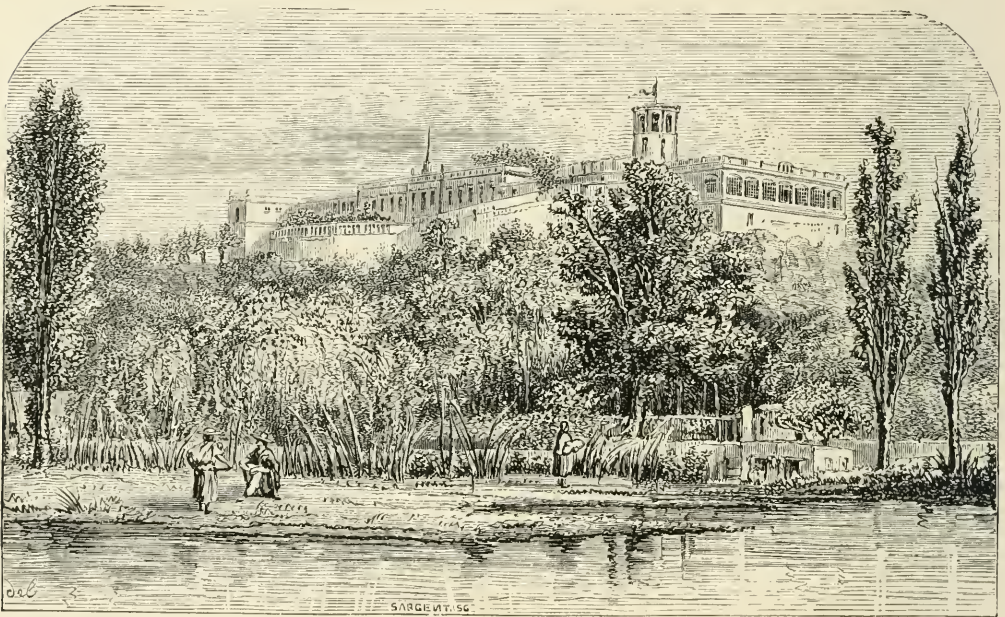
* According to Bustamente, Netzahualcoyotl was the owner of Chapultepec, and planted the great *ahuahuetes*, from 1425 to 1440. But it is more logical to suppose that it was a Toltec plantation dating back to the ninth century.

at all times by multitudes of devotees. To induce the Indians to welcome the Virgin Mary as their tutelar divinity, the priests took care to represent her with a dark complexion and the courtly robes worn by noble Mexican maidens in their time of prosperity. The story of the Aztec Virgin is so characteristic of the sanguinary instincts of the people who raised her to the rank of a deity, that we will tell it.

The Mexicans, after a series of wanderings and adventures, during which they endured all the hardships of a migratory life, succeeded at length in establishing themselves on the muddy islets of the principal lake, in the year 1325. Here they raised a temple to their war-god, Huitzilopochtli, on whose altars human sacrifices were offered. Prisoners were generally reserved for this purpose, but in times of public calamity the god required the best of the land. It is told how on one occasion, the oracle of Huitzilopochtli demanded that a Royal Princess should be sacrificed to him; and how the Aztec monarch sent to one of his vassals, the King of Colhuacan, to petition for one of his daughters to become the mother of the tutelar god—and as such share with him divine honours. The King of Colhuacan, flattered by the honour reserved for his daughter, unable besides to refuse, confided the young Princess to the care of the Aztec envoys, who escorted her with great pomp to the city where she was sacrificed, her skin being taken off after death to clothe the young priest who was to represent the deity in this solemnity. The cruelty was carried so far as to invite the father to be present at the bitter mockery of his child's deification; he came, penetrated the sanctuary, but at first the gloom of the temple did not let him see anything, until he was given a copal-gum torch, the flame of which bursting up suddenly revealed the horrible picture of the young priest standing close to the idol and receiving the homage of the multitude. The skin fitted

so tightly that the monarch recognised his daughter's mask, and almost mad with grief he fled the temple to mourn for his murdered child.*

The Mexican valley was occupied successively by various tribes, which advancing from the north and north-west, entered the country towards the end of the seventh century. The first and most remarkable of these, both from the mildness of their character



CHAPULTEPEC.

and the degree of their civilisation, were the Toltecs, who occupied Chapultepec as early as the eighth century, and established their capital at *Tula*, north of the Mexican valley, whose name *Toltec* was synonymous with architect. After a time, a rude tribe, the *Chichimecs*, entered the territory and were soon followed by other races, amongst which were the *Aztecs* or *Mexicans*, and the *Acolhuans* or *Tezcucans*. Some of these obtained leave from

* Clavigero, "Historia Antigua," vol. i. p. 75. Ramirez, chap. iv. p. 120.

features of the Mexican monarchs, Azayacoatl and the two Montezumas, together with the sons of the last Aztec emperor; two statues of this monarch and his father were to be seen as late as the last century, when they were destroyed by order of the Government.

Father Duran tells how Montezuma I. had himself and his first minister sculptured. Feeling that his end was drawing near, he summoned the doughty warrior Tlacacl, who for three reigns had shown his valour on the field of battle and his wisdom in council: "Brother Tlacacl," said the monarch, "it would be well that our names and persons should be graven on the rock of Chapultepec, and thus pass to posterity." "Your wish, most noble king, shall instantly be obeyed." And calling together the most renowned sculptors, Tlacacl imparted to them the royal command. In a few days two bas-reliefs were executed, so striking in resemblance, and so exquisite in workmanship, as to surprise Montezuma himself.

The Castle, which was built by the Viceroy Galvaez at the close of the seventeenth century, was transformed into a Military School by the Government in 1841; Maximilian during his short reign altered it, and made it his favourite residence. The Palace is once more occupied by the Military College, whose pupils have shown themselves worthy of it, by their heroic defence at the time of the American war. An observatory has been lately built, at the expense of the Government.

But it is time to return to Mexico, where we shall find the Indian pretty much what he was three or four hundred years ago. This arises from his having been subjected, from the earliest times, to Aztec rule and the severe discipline of its priests and afterwards to the still more cruel and unjust yoke of the Spaniards, who, by depriving him of civil rights and all his goods, degraded him to the low rank he now occupies. Before

the conquest the people was divided in three distinct and almost equally honourable classes, land proprietors, warriors, and merchants; but the conquerors, reserving for themselves all these good things, restricted the Indians to the occupations of *macehual* (tiller of the ground), or *tamene* (porter), that is, a beast of burden, used by marching armies or merchants in their distant expeditions; and, although all careers are now opened to him, he is slow to avail himself of his newly-acquired privileges.

As an *aguador*, he still conveys water to every household, in jars, which he carries one behind, the other in front, supported by leather thongs covering his head; as a vendor he brings coals in nets made of aloe strings; his earthenware, poultry, eggs, vegetables, in *huacales* or cases made of twigs, kept together by strings; and, indeed, his tools, kitchen utensils and the like, are the same as he formerly used. The only alteration he has made in his costume has been to adopt nether garments, but in the Uplands he dispenses with this and is satisfied with his *maxtli*, "broad band." He has not varied his diet, nor the manner of preparing it; the staple of his food is still Indian corn, which he grinds with a *metate*, granite roller, or bakes into flat cakes, *tortillas*, in *comals*, or baking ovens. His vegetables he seasons highly, and on days of festival he adds to this simple fare a turkey when he is well-to-do, a piece of pork when poor; his drink is the *pulque*, the invention of which dates nearly four hundred years back; his *jacal*, or hut, composed of sticks lined with clay, roofed with aloe leaves, measuring at the basement some seven or ten feet square, is exactly the jacal of ancient chroniclers, without any pavement, hardly any furniture, save some few images of saints, which have replaced the terra-cotta household divinities.

In former times, when he lived on the lagoons, with no right to the land, which was held by his enemies, he satisfied his hunger

with frogs and serpents, to be found in the marshes, salamanders, flies and flies' eggs, *ahuatli*, which latter were made into cakes, a dish which was adopted by the Spaniards; and, when further pressed by want and dearth, he invented *chinampas*, those floating gardens which so much surprised the conquerors. Chinampas were rafts of reeds, rushes, and other fibrous materials, which, tightly knit together, formed a sufficient basis for the heaps of black mud which the natives drew up from the bottom of the lake. Gradually islands were formed, some reaching two or three hundred feet in length, and three or four feet in depth, with a very rich soil, on which the thrifty Indian raised maize and vegetables for himself and flowers for the market, his prince, and his gods. Some of these chinampas were firm enough to allow the growth of small trees, and to have a hut for the owner, who, with a long pole resting on the sides or the bottom of the shallow basin, could change his position at pleasure, whether to move from an unpleasant neighbour or take his family on board, and moved on like some enchanted island over the water. In later times these floating gardens increased to such an extent that they completely girdled the city around with flowers and verdure, when every morning early numbers of boats, richly freighted, would be seen to glide through the canals and file out towards Plaza Mayor.* Mexico, since the diminution of the lake, has become a high and dry city of the main land, with its centre nearly a league distant from the water; chinampas are no more; small flower-beds, divided by narrow causeways, where the Indian still mans his canoe, are all that remain of the floating gardens of olden time. Should the traveller wish to study the natives, he should go on market days toward the road which leads out of S. Cosme, by which great numbers both of men and women enter

* Clavigero, vol. i. lib. vii. p. 223. Acosta, "Historia de las Indias," p. 472. Cortez, "Letters," p. 79. Torquemada, "Monarquia Indiana," vol. 11. p. 483.



MEXICAN WATER-CARRIER.



MEXICAN TORTILLERA AND STRAW MAT SELLERS.

the city, their legs and backs bent under burdens heavier sometimes than an animal could carry. Indian women wear a dark woollen petticoat, striped with yellow, red, and green, and a

piece of the same stuff, with an opening for the head, covers the bust and completes the costume. Notwithstanding their rags, some are not wanting in good looks, whilst most are well made, and were they cleanly and better dressed, many would be found strikingly pretty.

I only speak of young girls, for the old, covered with dirt rather than rags, are generally to be seen reeling under the influence of pulque. It is not too much to say that the Indian has retained all his primitive vices, and has added thereto those given him by his conquerors. Though he still preserves some of his popular legends, it is quite a chance if he understands anything about them; for in olden times, these were kept and transmitted by the upper classes, which have long ceased to exist, and the modern Indian knows absolutely nothing of his past history.

And here, to illustrate my meaning, I may be permitted to give an example of this marvellous ignorance, even regarding recent events. I happened to be in a village situated on Lake Chalco, when a number of Indians of both sexes, dressed up in old, ludicrous European costumes, got into boats and landed a short distance further, entering the village amidst a population which came out to meet them, with cries, hootings and blows, finally forcing them to re-embark. It was evident to me that this represented an invasion, which had been successfully repulsed, referring perhaps to the war of intervention, but though I asked, no one was able to enlighten me, contenting themselves with repeating "Francia, Francia." At last an old man said that the masquerade commemorated an incident in the Spanish war of 1808, during the first empire. And on my expressing my astonishment at the ignorance of the actors about a subject they represented every year: "Are your common people much wiser when they sing their Latin Mass?" objected

my American friend. I felt that I was answered, and I was silent.

The Indian is fond of money, his delight is to hoard, yet he is no better for it, as regards his daily life ; he has all the instinct of a miser without its benefit ; for your miser enjoys his money, he visits it by stealth, spends his time in counting, in contemplating it, whereas the Indian buries his hoardings out of sight ; the satisfaction of knowing that he is rich is all-sufficient for him, and he does not care for the things which his gold would procure. The Valley of Oaxaca, which for generations supplied the world with cochineal, is supposed to have millions of money buried underground. During my residence there, I knew a man who, it was rumoured, was fond of hoarding ; on one occasion he received some £200 for ingots and cochineal, and two days after asked me for the loan of four shillings. "Well, but what have you done with the money you got two days since?" I asked. "Esta colocado, Señor." "It's invested" (stowed underground). This secretive instinct, however, is not confined to the Indian, it is to be found among all conquered and persecuted races : serfs under Louis XIV. hid away both their bread and their money ; the inhabitants of Indo-China and others only pay their taxes under pressure of the stick. It may be that the thrifty habit of our own middle classes, their wish to hoard for the mere sake of it, their aversion to part with it for any purpose of public good, which forms such a striking contrast to our Transatlantic fellow-citizens, is attributable to this instinct, which still survives when the need for it has long ceased to exist. We are, alas, but the freedmen of yesterday, whereas Americans have now long enjoyed the blessings of free institutions, and have besides the enormous advantage of trying them in an entirely new country. Untrammelled alike by traditions or the bonds which still fetter us, they are able to work out their benevolent or brilliant schemes, con-

fident that their intelligence and their industry will lead them to new paths of progress and prosperity.

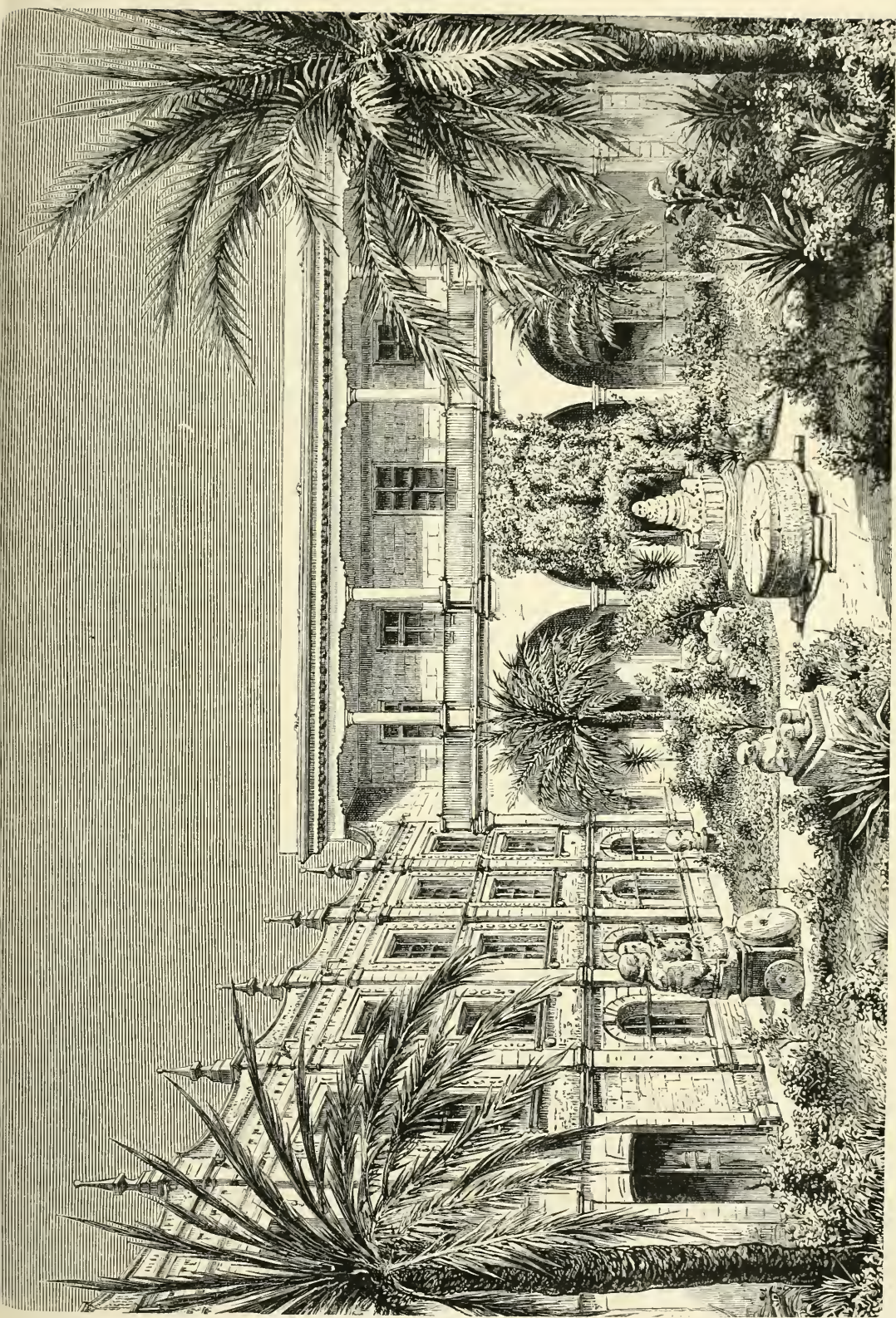
With the Indian this same instinct borders on fanaticism ; the man who finds a treasure covers it up again carefully, not dreaming of making use of it ; should he have a confidant, the latter will starve, nay, go through torture, rather than betray his friend. And here I cannot resist the temptation of telling an anecdote related to me by a Mexican friend bearing on the subject : A well-to-do Indian, who lived not far from Mexico, had a daughter whom a Frenchman was willing to marry, in the hope of inheriting the old man's fortune, which was supposed to amount to some £20,000. Like most Indians, he died intestate, when a search was made for his money, but none could be found. His only available property was his cottage and garden. The deceased was known to have had a wretchedly poor friend, the confidant of all his secrets. He was immediately applied to, and subjected to numerous questions by the heirs regarding the money, and to induce him to speak, they offered the quarter, nay, the half of the hidden treasure, but he still refused ; at last they thought of making him drunk, hoping that what they had been unable to obtain would be effected by pulque. He was made comfortable, when he became very confiding, so confiding that the expectant heir fully believed that a moment more would see him the happy recipient of the long-treasured-up secret, but the poor man suddenly stopped, horrified at what he was going to say, seeming to see his friend's ghost before him, reproaching him for his disloyalty.

We shall not be taking leave of the Indian if we pay a visit to the Museum, where Aztec pottery, Aztec jewellery, Aztec kings, and Aztec gods will remind us of him everywhere. The Mexican Museum cannot be called rich, in so far that there is nothing remarkable in what the visitor is allowed to see. After

reading the glowing accounts regarding Mexican manufacture and their marvellous objects of art, it was natural that I should be anxious to see the jewels, stuffs, manuscripts, and above all the paintings made with birds' feathers, representing domestic scenes, and the portraits of Aztec monarchs, but I saw nothing in the two large rooms devoted to Mexican antiquities. I was told that the Museum was not in working order, that nothing was classified, that more space was being prepared in which the precious objects now shut up in numerous cases would be laid out for the benefit of the public. It may be so. For the present, we have to content ourselves with a collection of obsidian, marble, and porphyry heads ; a number of large yokes, beautifully carved, besides several pieces of jade, rock-crystal, and bars of gold. As for the long rows of so-called "ancient vases," there is not one that is not imitation. This I know to my cost, for with a credulity which subsequent events hardly justified, I no sooner was told that these vases were of great antiquity, than I immediately ordered three hundred to be cast from them, which I caused to be placed in the Trocadéro during the Paris Exhibition ; but on an expert in such matters seeing them, he at once detected and exposed the fraud, and in my disappointment it was not much comfort to reflect, that with half the money expended on these comparatively worthless objects, I might have bought, close to Mexico, a whole collection of vases of undoubted antiquity. It is a curious circumstance, that Mexicans, even the best informed among them, as well as foreigners, should so often be victimised by vulgar forgers of antiquities, who trade on the passions of the collector and the gullibility of the public ; and that such things cannot be done in Europe without immediate detection, can only arise from the superior knowledge of our savants, and the greater facility afforded them of observing, classifying, and comparing the productions of all the civilised nations

of the world, in the numerous collections with which our museums, both public and private, abound. In my own case, after my excavations, I never could have been so grossly imposed upon by pottery modern in shape, over which ancient bas-reliefs had been incongruously reproduced, forming a monstrous medley of things old and new, without any originality whatever. Their history is this : the manufacture was carried out on a large scale at Tlatiloco, a Mexican suburb, between 1820 and 1828, and the author must have realised an enormous fortune, if we are to judge from the quantity which he sent broadcast into the world—most museums, nearly all private collections are infested with them, whilst a great number are even now bought by the unwary. The thing was done in this way. Vases of every shape were chosen, without much thought or care, relying on the ignorance and the stupidity of the public ; every form was used, whether a common water-jug, a flat or round vase, a rude or shapely jar, and by means of ancient moulds found in vast quantities in the whole area of the valley, heads, images, tiny figures, whistles, geometrical designs, palm-leaves, etc., were inlaid on the object, which had a simple, double, or treble twisted handle according to its size ; it was a tripod with a gaping mouth, or topped with arabesque, when the occasion served. Variety was its distinctive merit ; and when completed this fine work of art was buried some twelve months or more to impress upon it the hand of time, and thus prepared was launched on its course.

I trust that these few observations will serve as a warning to people, and save them from experience as costly as my own. Having now relieved my conscience, we will go back to the Museum and look at what I consider the finest portion, namely the court, planted with beautiful palm-trees, shrubs, and flowers, amongst which may be seen the most interesting

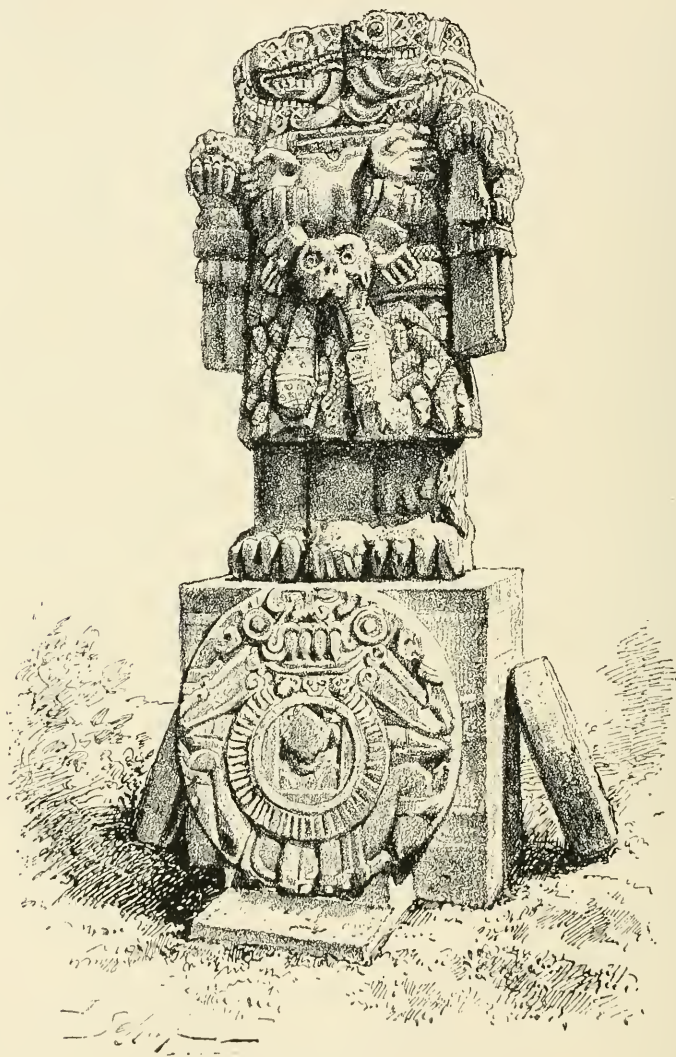


COURT IN THE MEXICO MUSEUM.

specimens of the whole collection. First and foremost is a statue of a man lying on his back, holding a cup with both hands and pressing it against his body. It was found at Chichen-Itza, in Yucatan, by Leplongeon, an American explorer, who was obliged to part with it in favour of the Mexican Government, in virtue of the law which declares all antiquities to be national property. Next to this in interest come two other statues, like it in all respects: one discovered at Tlascala, the other marked "unknown." This similarity of objects of art found among the populations of the plateaux and those of the Yucatan peninsula seems to point to identity of worship among those tribes. Sanchez, the director of the Museum, believes this statue to be Tetzcatzoncatl, god of wine; but Perez and Dr. Hamy are of opinion that it represents Tlaloc, god of rain, in which view I coincide. However that may be, we will speak of it at greater length when we come to Chichen-Itza, where it was unearthed. On the second plan, to the left, stands the Tlascalan Tlaloc, and behind it Quetzalcoatl, "the feathered serpent," tutelar deity of the Toltecs, and worshipped by all American tribes; he came to have many names, and was represented under various forms, according to his multifarious attributes. He was the Zoroaster of Anahuac; "under him the earth produced fruits and flowers of its own accord. An ear of Indian corn was as much as a man could carry. The air was filled with perfumes and the sweet melody of birds," etc.

At the extremity of the court, to the left, we find a block of serpentine with a magnificent head beautifully sculptured, marked in the catalogue as "the rising moon," but which Bustamente thinks to be Temascaltoci, the goddess who presided over ablutions, and Chavero, one of the many forms under which Quetzalcoatl was represented. In the same line with these stands a huge block, having a hideous figure of Death, Teoyaomiqui (a goddess).

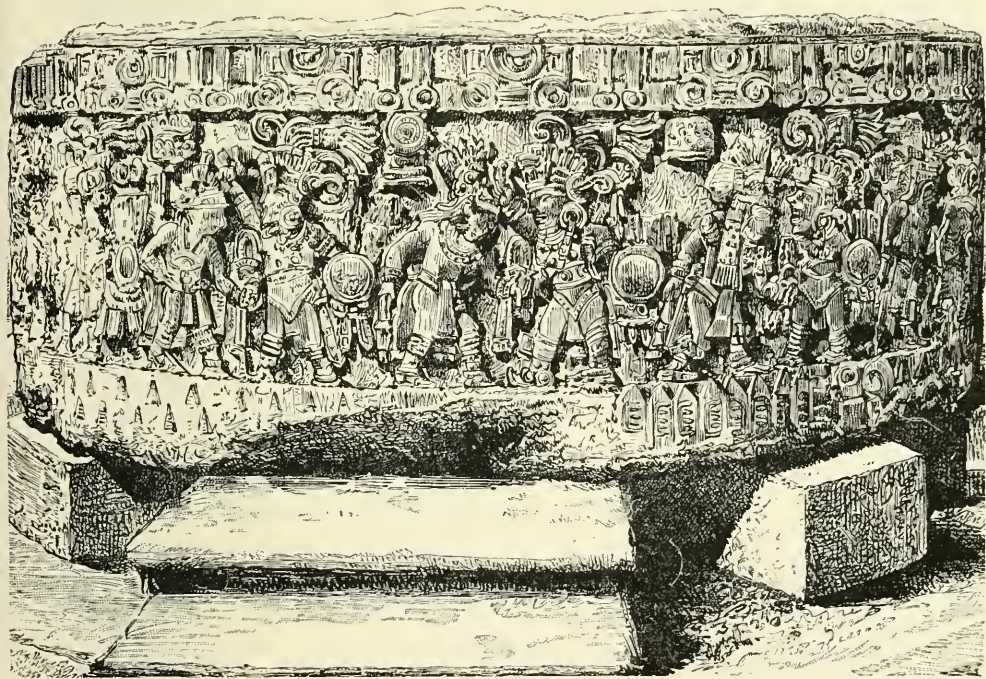
besides a vast number of divinities, ranging over the whole Indian Olympus, collected under the gallery at the furthest extremity of the court, most of which are frightful, and would



TEOYAOMIQUI, GOD OF DEATH AND WAR.

give a poor idea of Aztec talent, did we not know that they are all specimens of hieratic art, and as such were not permitted to vary in shape or design. And now we come to *Tizoc's* stone, or *Temalacatl*, the sun's stone, one of the most interesting in

the collection, and connected with a bloody episode which is reported by most historians. It would have been broken up for paving the square, like many other monuments of this kind found on the same spot and about the same time, had not Canon Gamboa arrested the work of destruction, and caused the stone to be placed in the north-west side of the churchyard, where



THE STONE OF THE SUN, OR OF TIZOC, MEXICO MUSEUM.

it was left undisturbed until 1824, when it was transferred to the University for a short time, and finally placed in the middle of the court of the New Museum. This monument is a block of trachyte, oblong in shape, measuring over eight feet in diameter, thirty-one feet in circumference, and some two feet six inches in depth. The surface is ornamented with two figures, portrayed in fifteen different attitudes, recalling the victories of the Emperor Tizoc. Two women are seen among the

vanquished, from which it would appear that the Salic Law was not in force among the Indians. In every one of these groups Tizoc is represented holding by the hair the vanquished, who, in a supplicating posture, seems to ask for mercy. Over each figure may be seen a hieroglyph, expressive of the conquered city represented by her chief. The surface of the stone is occupied by an image of the sun, having in the centre a hole some six inches deep, which is connected with a tube terminating on the upper circumference. This hole is supposed to have been made by the Spaniards in their attempt to split the stone, which was so fortunately stopped by Canon Gamboa, but not before they had mutilated every face of the different groups. This supposition seems borne out by the fact that it was not likely the original makers would have bored a hole right through the bassi-relievi, and thus deface their own work.

The *Temalacatl*, or "gladiatorial stone," as it was called by the Spaniards, must not be confused with the *Techcatl*, or "stone of sacrifice." The former was always to be found in the courts of the Temple, placed over a basement varying in bulk according to the size of the stone, from which the captive, particularly if he happened to be a man of distinction, was allowed to fight against a number of enemies in succession; but, besides the inequality of numbers, he was furnished only with a wooden sword ornamented with feathers along the blade, whereas his adversaries had weapons of obsidian, "as sharp as steel." If he succeeded in defeating them all, as did occasionally happen, he was allowed to escape, but if vanquished he was dragged to the stone, the upper surface of which was somewhat convex to receive the victim; on this the prisoner was stretched, five priests securing his head and his limbs, while a sixth, clad in a scarlet mantle, dexterously opened the breast of the victim with a sharp knife,

and inserting his hand in the wound, tore out the heart, and holding it up first towards the sun—a god common to all—cast it at the face or the feet of the divinity to whom the temple was dedicated, whilst the multitudes knelt in humble adoration at the foot of the stone or pyramid ready to receive the body, which was hurled down by the priests, and which the people divided among themselves, to have it served up in an entertainment in honour of the particular god they were celebrating.



THE TEMALACATI, OR GLADIATORIAL STONE, FROM RAMIREZ MS.

The sacrifice ceremonial, whether from the summit of the Temple or from the gladiatorial stone, was exactly the same, save that the latter, standing but a few feet from the ground, allowed the whole city to witness the ghastly details of the sight. These stones were perfectly plain or beautifully sculptured, like the one under notice, according to the *teocalli* it was destined for, or the degree and importance of the donor. The *temalacatl* or stone of Montezuma I., which up to the present time has not been found, is supposed to lie buried under the "Plaza de las

Armas" in Mexico. Besides these, there was a smaller circular stone, the *Cnauhxicalli*, "eagle's cup," so called from the hearts of the victims being thrown into the hole situated in the centre, and which now, by a curious contrast, is used as a drinking trough by pigeons and small birds.*

The last Montezuma would have also erected a Temalacatl, for which a huge block of stone was transported from Aculco, beyond Lake Chalco, but in crossing a bridge which traversed one of the canals, the supports gave way, and the gigantic mass was precipitated into the water, where it still lies.

A military point of honour, as understood among the western nations of Europe, was so deeply rooted in the Indian warriors that they would suffer death rather than be guilty of any act that could lower them in the estimation of their fellow-citizens. With the Mexicans and Tlaxcaltecs, a soldier, if unfortunate enough to be made a prisoner, was reserved for sacrifice, especially if he happened to be of superior rank; to be ransomed was deemed unworthy and a disgrace. A few years before the arrival of the Spaniards, the Uexotzincas, the Tlaxcaltecs and the Mexicans were at war with each other. In one of the frequent skirmishes between the rival nations, it happened that a Tlaxcaltec chief, by name Tlahuicole, was captured. His fame as a warrior had spread far and wide; his prowess was so well known that few cared to measure their strength with his, or feel the weight of his huge tomahawk, which a man of common stature could hardly lift. But one day, in the heat of pursuit, he got far ahead of all his companions, when he was waylaid in a morass, immediately surrounded, placed in a cage, and conveyed to Mexico amidst the rejoicings of the enemy. He was brought

* Sahagun. Ramirez. Duran, "Historia de las Indias de Nueva España," vol. i. chap. xx. Leon y Gama, "Las dos Piedras." Conquistador Anonimo, "Coleccion de Documentos." Icazbalceta, vol. i. p. 375.

to the Emperor Moteuhçoma, who, on hearing his name, not only spared his life but offered him his liberty, and treated him with marked distinction. But Tlahuicole refused everything, and besought the Emperor to devote him to the gods according to custom. Seeing that he could not be prevailed upon to accept any offer, however brilliant, Moteuhçoma gave orders that he should be tied on the gladiatorial stone and that some of his best soldiers should fight him, whilst he himself, with a numerous retinue, witnessed the scene. Tlahuicole killed successively eight men, and wounded upwards of twenty; but he succumbed at last, and was carried off to be offered to the war-god Huitzilopochtli.*

But to return: this temalacatl clearly belongs to Tizoc, for his portrait is seen on the edge of the stone, whilst a speckled leg (he is supposed to have had varices) is sculptured above his image. The monument, however, like the great temple, may have been completed by his successor Ahuitzotl between 1484-1486.

Human sacrifices were made even more revolting by cannibalism, which from the Aztecs spread among all the surrounding nations, and were adopted by the populations with which they were at war by way of reprisals. The more humane chiefs, such as Netzahualcoyotl, king of Texcuco, tried to oppose this barbarous custom; but they were obliged to yield before the ignorance of the people and the fanaticism of the priests, who seeing that the supply of prisoners of war began to fail, clamoured for more, and urged on the monarchs the necessity of sacrificing their own subjects, on the ground that they would be more easily obtained; that they would be fresher, more acceptable, and in the same condition as children and slaves. In the year 1454, the

* Torquemada, "Monarquía Indiana," vol. i. lib. i. p. 82. Diego Duran, chap. lxvi.

country was visited by a horrible famine, and the priests declared that the celestial wrath could only be appeased by regular and numerous sacrifices; to obtain which a treaty was entered into by the three allied kings of Mexico, Texcuco, and Tlacopan with the three republics of Tlascala, Huezotzinco, and Cholula, by which they agreed that their troops should engage to fight on the first days of each month, on the territory between Cuantepec and Ocelotepec, and thus supply themselves with human victims. The men engaged in these encounters received the terrible name of "enemies of the house," whilst these monthly affrays are known in history as the "Holy War." It was not on the circular *Temalacatl* that victims were sacrificed, but on the dreadful *Techcatl*, "stone of sacrifice," which was 6 ft. 6 in. long by 3 ft. 3 in. wide, and about 3 ft. high, so as to enable the officiating priests to have a thorough command over their victim. At the dedication of the great temple of Huitzilopochtli in 1486, the prisoners who for some years had been reserved for this solemn occasion, were drawn up and ranged in files, forming a procession along the narrow causeways two miles long, when the number sacrificed is almost beyond belief, and is variously estimated at 80,000 and 20,000. The massacre lasted four days, and was begun by the kings of Mexico, Texcuco, Tacuba, and the Minister Tlacael, until they were relieved by the priests. However, the number of victims immolated has no doubt been much exaggerated.

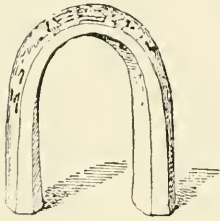
It is difficult to reconcile these revolting usages with a people that had made great advance in civilisation. American writers have tried to palliate the abominable practices of their ancestors, on the ground that they shared them in common with every other nation in the early stage of their history. In their eyes the Aztecs, if not commendable, were at least pardonable, and Orozco

* Diego Duran, vol. I. chap. xxix. Ixtlilxochitl, "Historia Chichimeca," chap. xli., etc.

y Berra says that "human sacrifices originate from an error of the mind rather than from evil disposition ; that it is the result of an exaggerated religious feeling, and not a real desire to do evil. That this institution, if philosophically considered, is not deserving of the intempestive lamentations of a few sentimental moralists.* The horror I feel," he adds, "for the revolting abuse of human sacrifice, yields to what I feel for utter impiety ; I will go further, and say that I prefer human sacrifice to atheism, as I prefer the ignorant negro who bows before his fetish, to a free-thinker." Obviously Orozco is animated with the same spirit as his ancestors. An Aztec of the olden time would have adduced better reasons, for he held that to be sacrificed on the altar of his god was even more glorious than to die in battle, since it ensured him a speedy passage into paradise ; and as the enemy was never slain if there were a chance of taking him alive, the number of those who disappeared was a fixed quantity. The same argument is urged in favour of cannibalism, but it is at least doubtful if it ever existed as an institution among other civilised nations. Men, however cruel, do not feed on one another, unless obliged by an absolute necessity ; and cannibalism, which no doubt existed with all primitive populations, only continued among those who were deprived of sufficient space where they could hunt and feed their flocks, and who were reduced to a scanty supply of roots and herbs for their subsistence. This was observed among the Caraïbs at the time of the Conquest ; in the islands of the Pacific, in Australia, where the soil is so poor, that although cannibalism prevails, the increase of population has to be kept down, and the recent introduction of pigs in the islands has diminished but not eradicated this ancient practice, which has never flourished with races provided with bears, reindeer, horses, and herds. This usage, which at first was

* Orozco y Berra, "*Historia Antigua*," vol. II. chap. ix. p. 96. He quotes Joseph de Maistre.

a necessity, became a sacred tradition with the Aztecs, with whom religion was all-powerful ; it directed the State, presided over the minutest details of domestic life, and as the influence of the priests was unbounded, peasants and princes had to bow their necks to their tyranny. They cannot be called cannibals, however, in the coarsest sense of the word, for they did not feed on human flesh to gratify their appetite, but as a duty, and in obedience to their religion ; and during the long and terrible siege of Mexico not a single case of cannibalism is recorded against them by ancient



WRONG SACRIFICIAL COLLAR.



RIGHT SACRIFICIAL COLLAR.

authorities. Whence did they derive this religious practice ? Not from the nations of the ancient continent with whom they have so much in common, for at that time cannibalism was no longer practised among the nomadic tribes of Eastern Asia ; nor from Japan or China, where the people had always lived on the produce of the soil ; it is probable that they received it from the Caraïbs of the Antilles and the Polynesian races of the Pacific, who made them forget the mild teachings and higher civilisation of the Toltecs.

We give the drawings of two yokes : No. 1 is the yoke which up to the present time has been universally accepted as that used for securing the victim during the sacrifice, of which several specimens are to be seen in Mexican museums and in our own Trocadéro, but which, owing to the cylindrical shape of the arch, measuring some sixteen inches in height by about seven in width, we maintain could never have been used for the purpose assigned to it ; whereas No. 2, which we claim to have unearthed, answers in our opinion exactly to the requirements of a yoke for such a purpose. It is almost the width of the Techcatl, and is concave

on its lower surface, which makes it a perfect fit for a convex stone ; it has, moreover, a round hollow in the centre, sufficiently large to steady a man's neck, so that the priest had only to apply this yoke to prevent any movement, when, to use Father Duran's expression, he let fall his sharp silex knife and the victim opened "like a pomegranate."*

Notwithstanding the assertion of most historians respecting the work of the Aborigines, it is difficult to account how with the tools they were acquainted with they could cut not only the hardest substances, but also build the numerous structures which are still seen in Mexico and Central America, together with the sculptures, bas-reliefs, statues, and inscriptions like those we reproduce. These monuments were innumerable, of all dimensions, and according to Leon y Gama,† there was no town or settlement which did not possess on the stones of its walls, on the rocks of its mountains, the year of its foundation, its origin, and the history of its progress engraved in symbols and characters which could only be read by the Indians themselves. It is all the more inexplicable that they should have only used stone implements, that copper was abundant, and that they knew how to temper and make it nearly as hard as steel. The method employed by stone sculptors, however, has in all probability been lost.

Clavigero‡ says that stone was worked with tools of hard stone ; that copper hatchets were used by carpenters, and also to cultivate the soil and to fell trees ; and Mendieta writes that both carpenters and joiners used copper tools, but that their work was not so beautiful as that of the sculptors on stone who had silex implements.§

* Diego Duran, vol. i. chap. xxix.

† Antonio de Leon y Gama, "Descripcion Hist. & Cronologico de las Dos Piedras," pp. 2 and 5.

‡ Clavigero, "Historia Antigua," vol. i. p. 242 ; *id.* notes, p. 6 ; *id.* vol. i. chap. vii.

§ Geronimo Mendieta, "Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana," vol. iv. chap. xii.

Some historians have proved to their own satisfaction that copper was unknown to the Indians ; but had they taken the trouble to read, however slightly, any authority on the subject, they would have paused before they advanced a theory which is entirely at variance with all writers, both ancient and modern. It is an ascertained fact that very rich copper-mines have been worked since the Conquest ;* and in 1873, whilst sinking a shaft in a copper-mine at Aguila, in the State of Guerrero, the miner lost suddenly the vein ; and on examining the cause of the accident an excavation was found 4 ft. 4 in. long, 4 ft. 9 in. deep, and over 3 ft. wide, in which was a rich copper vein from 2 to 4 in. in thickness. The engineer, Felipe Lorainzar, could see no sign of iron or powder having been used, but the walls showed marks of fire ; and both the copper ore and the rock in which it was embedded, were shattered and split in various places. In the rubbish were found 142 stones of different dimensions, shaped like hammers and wedges, the edges of which were blunt or broken ; these stones were of a different substance from the surrounding rock, clearly indicating that the mine had originally been worked by the natives.†

Copper was likewise found in Chili, Columbia, Chihuahua, and in New Mexico. Before the Conquest, the Indians procured lead and tin from the mines of Tasco, but copper was the metal used in mechanic arts. Hatchets, arms, and scissors were made of copper found in the mountains of Zocatollan. The letters of Cortez tell us that among the taxes paid by the conquered people, figured copper hatchets and lingots of the same metal, which were paid every eighty days. Bernal Diaz‡ says that in his second expedition

* Between the years 1832-1842, copper-mines were worked successively by an Italian of the name of Chialiva, and others.—TRANSL.

† "Anales del Museo de Mejico," vol. I. ; art. by Don Jesus Sanchez.

‡ "Bernal Diaz del Castillo," lib. I. cap. xvi

with Grijalva, the inhabitants of Goatzacoalco brought them upwards of six hundred copper hatchets in three days, having wood handles exquisitely painted, and so polished that "we thought at first they were gold." Copper was also found in Venezuela, where, at the present day, jewels of copper, or mixed with gold, crocodiles, lizards, and frogs are found. We procured some and placed them in the Trocadéro, having the same dimensions as those in Central America. Those we found on our first visit to Mitla, are thin, shaped like a *tau*, and hardly 4 in. long. Dupaix found similar hatchets at Mitla, and he thinks they were used as currency, a supposition all the more probable, that an Indian from Zochoxocotlan, near Oaxaca, found an earthen pot containing twenty-three dozen of these taus, but differing slightly from each other both in size and thickness. We read in Torquemada,* that copper tablets, varying in thickness and shaped like a tau, were used as currency in various regions, and that they contained a large proportion of gold.

Gumesindo Mendoza mentions copper scissors in the Mexican Museum which were found to contain 97·87 lead, 100 copper, 213 platinum, 100 tin, and infinitesimal quantities of gold and zinc. On removing the oxide which covered them the bronze looked like red gold, its density being equal to 8·815; it is harder than copper and breaks under strong pressure, the broken part showing a fine granulation, like steel; but its hardness is less than carburetted iron and insufficient for the use it was intended for.

Humboldt says that Peruvian scissors contained 94 lead, 100 copper, 6 platinum, 100 tin, and that their specific weight was 8·815; other scissors analysed by Ramirez yielded 90 lead, 100 copper, 10 platinum, and 100 tin. It seems almost impossible that the Indians

* Torquemada, "Monarquía Indiana," vol. II. p. 560. Ixtlilxochitl, in his fourth *Relacion*, says that the Toltecs used oblong pieces of copper shaped like hatchets, about the thickness of a real.

should not have used these admirable bronze scissors to build palaces, sculpture their idols and the images of their kings, which are still visible on the porphyry rocks of Chapultepec ; and if it is denied that they were able to carve such hard substances, they must be credited with having easily worked the calcareous stones of Chiapas and Yucatan.

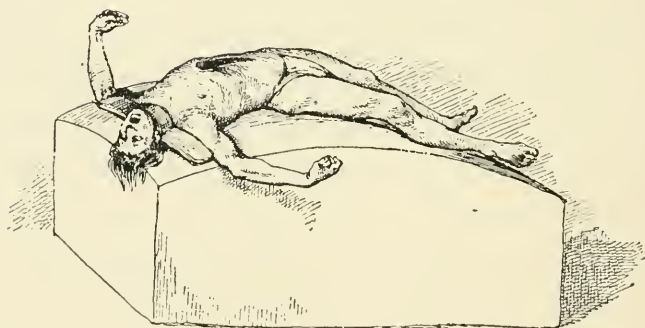
The American tribes had reached the transition epoch between the polished stone and the bronze period, which was marked by considerable progress in architecture and some branches of science. With them this period lasted longer than in the old world, owing to their never having come in contact with nations of a higher civilisation and possessed of better tools. Their only scientific data in the past were traditions which, if we believe their apologists, were carefully preserved and developed ; but they have nearly all been lost, and great uncertainty must for ever rest upon the degree of their scientific progress ; for it is equally impossible to accept either the wild theories of the good Abbé Brasseur, who sees in the Troano and Chilmalpoca codices, a whole system of geology dating ten thousand years back, as it is impossible to accept the childish dreams of Leplongeon, who credits the Mayas with every discovery down to the electric telegraph ; nor yet those who maintain that without astronomical instruments (since they were unacquainted with glass) the Aztecs had discovered the composition of the sun and the transit of Venus. It seems as futile to make the Nahuas the inventors of everything as to rank them with mere savages. The religion of a people is a sure index of the degree of its culture ; we know that the moral code and religion of the Toltecs showed wonderful growth towards all the essentials of a high civilisation, for religion in its early stage is but a gross fetishism, of which the head of the family is the priest, who performs before his household god the simple ceremonies he learnt from his

forefathers. But as the tribe rises in importance his duties become more complicated, and he is willing to lay down his priestly office in favour of a poet or prophet, who, whilst the warriors are engaged in warfare and other avocations, shall pray for the welfare of the tribe and expound the wishes of the deity, receiving for his services part of the booty or the produce of the chase, and later, have his share of the land under cultivation. He soon adopts a dress so as to be distinguished from the warriors and the people ; and as the number of priests increases, offerings are multiplied ; a more imposing ceremonial replaces the simple worship of former days, temples and chapels are built, the image of the god is placed in the sanctuary, and only approached by the high priest, who becomes the sole interpreter between god and man. The former is now given numerous personalities, according to his various attributes, and the simple fetish of an early epoch develops in process of time into a mighty host, frequently numbering upwards of three thousand deities like the Aztec Olympus, for whose service a numerous priesthood and great wealth are required, implying a high degree of civilisation.

That there should be great uncertainty upon questions resting chiefly on vague traditions is natural enough, but that the same should be the case with matters that admitted of easy proof seems unaccountable ; as, for instance, the name of Montezuma, in whose intimacy the Spaniards lived several months ; yet of the twenty-three chroniclers who wrote about him, two call him Motecuhzoma, three Montezuma, and the remaining eighteen spell his name in as many different ways.

And here we will take leave of the Aztecs, whose history has been so admirably written by Prescott. My object in writing about them was to give some idea, however slight, of this people, in order to prepare the reader to follow me in my investigations

respecting the far more ancient civilisation of the Toltecs—a civilisation which from them passed to the Aztecs, the Nahua tribes, and the people of Central America ; the remains of which are still to be seen, whilst its stones will compose, together with chroniclers and historians, the foundation of our work.



HUMAN SACRIFICES.



ANCIENT INDIAN POTTERY.

CHAPTER IV.

TULA.

Journey to Tula—The Toltecs—Ancient Historians—Origins—Peregrinations—Foundation of Tula—Toltec Religion—Chief Divinities—Art—Industry—Measurement of Time—The Word *Calli*—Architecture.

THE journey to Tula, capital of the Toltecs, our next destination, is performed partly by railway and partly by diligence over a distance of some sixteen leagues north of Mexico. The valley in this month (August) is at its best; immense plantations of Indian corn give it the aspect of a green sea, whilst a grand range of mountains and lofty summits bound it at the horizon. We go through the Tejan district, stopping a few minutes at Tacuba, where the old cypress of the “Melancholy night” is again pointed out to us. Our next station is Atzacapotzalco, once an independent state; then Tlanepantla. The country, as far as the eye can reach, presents nothing but the same plantations, the same hamlets, the same poor squalid huts, whilst here and

there a few Indians in tatters, and swarms of naked children, gaze at us stupidly as we speed along. Now we come to a fortress-like church, formerly used as a stronghold by the Pronunciados; we notice for the first time some stunted poplars some rare willow-trees, and by-and-by hedges of prickly pear and now that we are in the diligence, the country somewhat changes; instead of long stretches of green maize, we have immense plantations of aloe, which to my mind, whether viewed from afar or near, are never a picturesque feature in the landscape. It is a wonder how we advance at all, for the wheels of our carriage almost disappear in the ruts of the worst road I ever travelled upon; I am confident that nothing has been done to it since the day it was opened. We cross a muddy river, when, with cracking of whip and galloping horses, we enter a village shaded by great ash-trees, and draw up before a respectable-looking inn, where we take up our quarters, for we are in Tula, once the brilliant capital of the Toltecs, but now reduced to a small straggling town numbering some 1,500 souls.

The Toltecs, as was stated before, were one of the Nahuan tribes, which from the seventh to the fourteenth century spread over Mexico and Central America. Their existence has been denied by various modern historians, although all American writers agree that the numerous bands which followed them in the country received their civilisation from them. It must be admitted, however, that our knowledge rests chiefly on traditional legends full of anachronisms, transmitted to us by the nations that came after them; but it will be our care to fill up the enormous discrepancies to be met with at almost every page, by the monuments it has been our good fortune to bring to light. Two writers, Ixtlilxochitl and Mariano Veytia, have written about this people: the first in his "*Historia Chichemeca*" and "*Relaciones*," the second in his "*Historia Antigua de*



EXTRACTING PULQUE.

Mejico ;" the latter being more explicit, it is from him that we will chiefly borrow, without neglecting, however, other chroniclers. Both made use of the same documents, drew from the same

sources, the traditionary legends of their country; and Veytia, besides his own, had access to Botturini's valuable collection of Mexican manuscripts, so that he was well acquainted with American antiquities. Ixtlilxochitl, on the other hand, as might be expected, in writing the history of his ancestors, whose language he understood and whose hieroglyphs he could decipher, is inspired by patriotic zeal; and it will be found that these historians have just claims to our admiration for the compass of their inquiries, and the sagacity with which they conducted them.

A third writer, Ramirez, by far the most illustrious of those who have treated the same subject, speaking of the two historians who preceded him, says: "I am not claiming infallibility for our historians, yet it must surely be conceded that, if no credence is given to our own, the same measure must be meted out to all the traditions of other countries, for neither Diodorus, Josephus, Livy, Tacitus, nor other historians, are able to bring the array of documents with which our history abounds in support of their assertions. I have purposely omitted Herodotus, the most curious and instructive among ancient historians, because modern discoveries and modern criticism have cleared him from the unjust attacks of Plutarch. A history is true and highly instructive, although it may contain absurd propositions, if it faithfully transmits the traditions, the belief, and the customs of a people; as it may be absolutely false, although relating facts which seem natural and probable, but are only the invention of the author. Mexican history and biography, like those of other nations, are founded on tradition and historical documents; than which none are better authenticated or more trustworthy."

We think Ramirez proves his case, and, in writing these chapters, we will not be more critical than he is.*

* Prescott, "History of the Conquest of Mexico. Critical Notes by Jose Ramirez," vol. II. Cumplido.

Veytia,* like all historians of that time, places the primitive home of the Toltecs in Asia, to make his account agree with Genesis, where it is said that after the destruction of the Babylonian Tower, "The Lord scattered the sons of men upon the face of all the earth." According to him, they crossed Tartary and entered America through the Behring Straits, by means of large flat canoes, and square rafts made of wood and reeds; the former are described, and called *acalli*, "water houses," in their manuscripts. Directing their course southward, they built their first capital, *Tlapallan*, "coloured," subsequently *Huehue-Tlapallan*, to distinguish it from a later *Tlapallan*. Huehue-Tlapallan was the cradle whence originated the various tribes which peopled America. Each tribe was called after the father or chief of the family, who was also its ruler; hence came the *Olmecs*, from *Olmecatli*; the *Xicalancas*, from *Xicalantli*, etc.; it is uncertain whether the *Chichimecs* derived their appellation from Cichen, the man, or Chichen, the town in Yucatan.†

The Toltecs, by the common consent of historians, were the most cultured of all the Nahua tribes, and better acquainted with the mode of perpetuating the traditions of their origin and antiquities. To them is due the invention of hieroglyphs and characters, which, arranged after a certain method, reproduced their history on skins of animals, on aloe and palm-leaves, or by knots of different colours, which they called *nepohualtzitzin*, "historical events," and also by simple allegorical songs. This manner of writing history by maps, songs, and knots, was handed down from father to son, and thus has come to us.‡

Tlaczatzin was the next city they built; and here, after thirteen years of warfare, they separated from the main body of the nation

* Veytia, "Hist. Antigua," vol. I. chap. i.

† Veytia. Ixtlilxochitl says the same thing.

‡ These knots were Chinese; in Peru they were called *quipos*.

and migrated some seventy miles to the south, where in 604 they founded Tlapallanco, "small Tlapallan," in remembrance of their first capital. But the arrival of fresh immigrants caused them to remove further south, and, under the command of their wise man, *Hueman*,* "the Strong Hand," who is endowed with *power*, *wisdom*, and *intelligence*, the Toltecs set out in 607, and marked their progress by building Jalisco, where they remained eight years; then Atenco, where they were five years; and twenty years at Iztachuexuca. In after times other Nahuatl tribes followed them by different routes, as the ruins in New Mexico and the Mexican Valley everywhere attest.

Las Casas Grandes, the settlements in the Sierra Madre, the ruins of Zape, of Quemada, recalling the monuments at Mitla, others in Queretaro, together with certain features in the building of temples and altars, which remind one of the Mexican manuscripts from which the Toltec, Aztec, and Yucatec temple was built, make it clear that the civilising races came from the north-west; and Guillemin Tarayre,† like ourselves, sees in the *calli* the embryo of the *teocalli*, which developed into the vast proportions of the pyramidal mounds found at Teotihuacan, Cholula, in Huasteca, Misteca, Tabasco, and Yucatan.

The next city built by the Toltecs was Tollatzinco, where they remained sixteen years; and finally settled at Tollan or Tula, which became their capital. The date of its foundation is variously given; Ixtlilxochitl sets it down at 556, Clavigero 667, and Veytia assigns 713 A.D. as the probable date. In our estimation, this divergence of opinion confirms rather than invalidates the existence of this people.

When the Aztecs reached Anahuac, Atzacapotzalco, Colhuacan,

* The same as *Kab-ul*, "the Working Hand," which we shall see at Izamal.

† Guillemin Tarayre, "Archives de la Commission Scientifique du Mexique," pp. 378, 379.

and Texcuco were small flourishing states. They had inherited from the Toltecs many useful arts, their code of morals, philosophy and religion, which in their turn they taught the Aztecs, so that the institutions and customs of these different tribes were common to all; and in default of documents which have been lost, we ascribe nearly all the historians of the Conquest relate of the Aztecs, whom they found the dominant race, as applicable to the Toltecs, the fountain of all progress both on the plateaux and in Central America, where we shall follow them. As for the Aztecs, who settled for the first time on the Mexican lake at the beginning of the fourteenth century, they were at that period nothing but a rude, barbarous tribe, and to the last day of their political existence they remained a military caste.

Among the ruins to be found at Tula are those of an unfinished temple called *Quetzali*, consisting of pillars in the shape of serpents, the heads of which form the basement and the tails the capital.

Some writers, amongst whom is Botturini, think the Toltecs were preceded by the Olmecs and Xicalancas on the territories of Tlaxcala, Huexcotzinco, and Puebla, when, after years of inter-tribal conflict, they settled in the Yucatan peninsula. But we have found in several Indian writers, that at the coronation of *Chalchiuhtlanetzin*, "bright stone," King of the Toltecs, the Olmecs and Xicalancas came to swear allegiance and submit to his authority; and there is nothing to make one suppose that they were compelled to leave the country, for they seem to have amalgamated so well with the new-comers that their very name was merged in theirs, although they retain the memory of their origin even to this day. "*There can be no doubt*," says Veytia, "*that some of these people (Toltecs) established themselves in Yucatan*"*—a remarkable passage, which we find confirmed at

* Veytia, "Hist. Antigua de Mejico," vol. I. chap. xxv. p. 233.

every step. According to the same authority, they built Tula in six years, when, to avoid the personal jealousy of the Caciques, they petitioned for the second son of King Huehue-Tlapallan, whom they proclaimed their ruler under the name of *Chalchiuhtlanetzin*.

All the Toltecs did was excellent, graceful, and delicate; exquisite remains of their buildings covered with ornamentation, together with pottery, toys, jewels, and many other objects are found throughout New Spain, for, says Sahagun,* "they had spread everywhere." Both Veytia and Ixtlilxochitl† ascribe



TOLTEC POTTERY.

a common origin to the Nahua, Toltec, Acolhuan, and Mexican tribes. "The Toltecs were good architects and skilled in mechanic arts; they built great cities like Tula, the ruins of which are still visible; whilst at Totonac they erected palaces of cut stone, ornamented with designs and human figures, recalling their chequered history." "At Cuernavaca" (probably Xochicalco), he adds, "were palaces entirely built of cut stone, without mortar, beams, girders, or wood of any kind." Torquemada speaks of the Toltecs in the same terms, observing that "they were supposed to

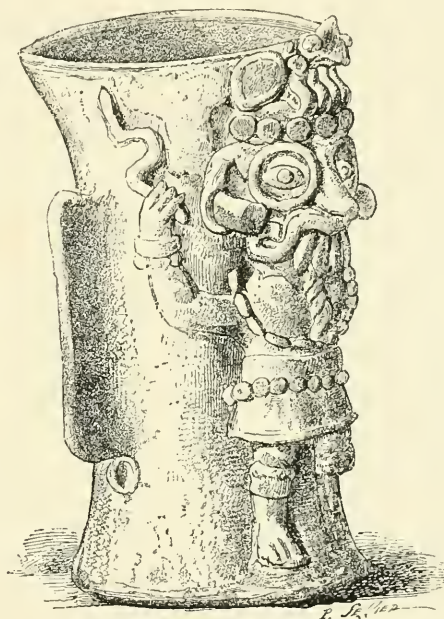
* Sahagun, "Hist. General de las Cosas de la Nueva España," lib. x. cap. xxix.

† Ixtlilxochitl, "Hist. Chichemeca," cap. ii. third and fourth Relaciones.

have come from the west, and to have brought with them maize, cotton, seeds, and the vegetables to be found in this country ; that they were cunning artists in working gold, precious stones, and other curiosities.”* On the other hand, Clavigero thinks “they were the first nation mentioned in American traditions, and justly celebrated among the Nahuas, for their culture and mechanic skill ; and that the name *Toltec* came to be synonymous for architect and artificer.”† Quotations might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but the foregoing will suffice to prove the existence of this people and their peculiar genius.

Their law of succession was somewhat curious : each king was to rule one of their centuries of fifty-two years ; if he lived beyond it he was required to give up the crown to his son, and, in case of death, a joint regency took the reins of government for the remaining years. Their sacred book,

teomoxtli, contained both their annals and their moral code. It is conjectured, with what evidence is uncertain, that they worshipped an “unknown god,” perhaps the origin of the “unknown god” to whom the King of Texcuco raised an altar. Their principal deities, however, were *Tonacatecuhtli*, the “Sun” and the “Moon,” to whom temples were first erected ; to these they added *Tlaloc*, god of rain, and *Quetzalcoatl*, god of air and



TLALOC, FROM A PIECE OF POTTERY.

* Torquemada, “Monarquía Indiana,” vol. i. chap. xiv.

† Clavigero, “Hist. Antigua de Mejico,” vol. i. lib. ii. pp. 51, 52.

wisdom.* Tlaloc, according to Torquemada, was the oldest deity known, for when the Acolhuans, who followed the Chichimecs, arrived in the country, he was found on the highest summit of the Texcucan mountain.† His paradise, called *Tlalocan*, was a place of delight, an Eden full of flowers and verdure; whilst the surrounding hills were called “Tlaloc mounts.”‡ He was emphatically the god of many places, of many names, and numerous personifications; as Popocatepetl he presided over the formation of clouds and rain, he was the “world-fertiliser,” the “source of favourable weather,” sometimes represented dark in colour, his face running with water to signify a rich yielding soil; he carried a thunderbolt in his right hand, a sign of thunder and lightning; whilst his left held a tuft of variegated feathers, emblem of the different hues of our globe; his tunic was blue hemmed with gold, like the heavens after rain. His wife, *Chalchiuhtlicue*, goddess of waters, was represented wearing a blue petticoat, the colour of the mountain Iztaccihuatl when seen at a distance, which was sacred to her.

Most historians mention Quetzalcoatl, at first a generic name, whom posterity endowed with every virtue and deified.§ His great temple was at Tula, but he was also worshipped in Yucatan under the name of *Cukulcan*,|| having the same meaning with Quetzalcoatl. He had travelled thither with a branch of the Toltecs, which, advancing from west to east, had taken Tabasco on their way, and occupied the peninsula earlier than a second branch, which entered the country by a southern route, under the command of their chief *Tutulxiu*, and became the rival

* Veytia, “Hist. Antigua de Mejico,” tome I. cap. xxv. p. 233.

† Torquemada, tome II. lib. vi. cap. xxiii.

‡ Veytia, “Hist. Antigua,” tome I. cap. xxvii.

§ Tezomoc. Duran. Mendieta. Gomara. Sahagun, append. of lib. III. cap. ix. Clavigero, tome I. p. 151.

|| Torquemada, tome II. lib. vi. cap. xxiii.

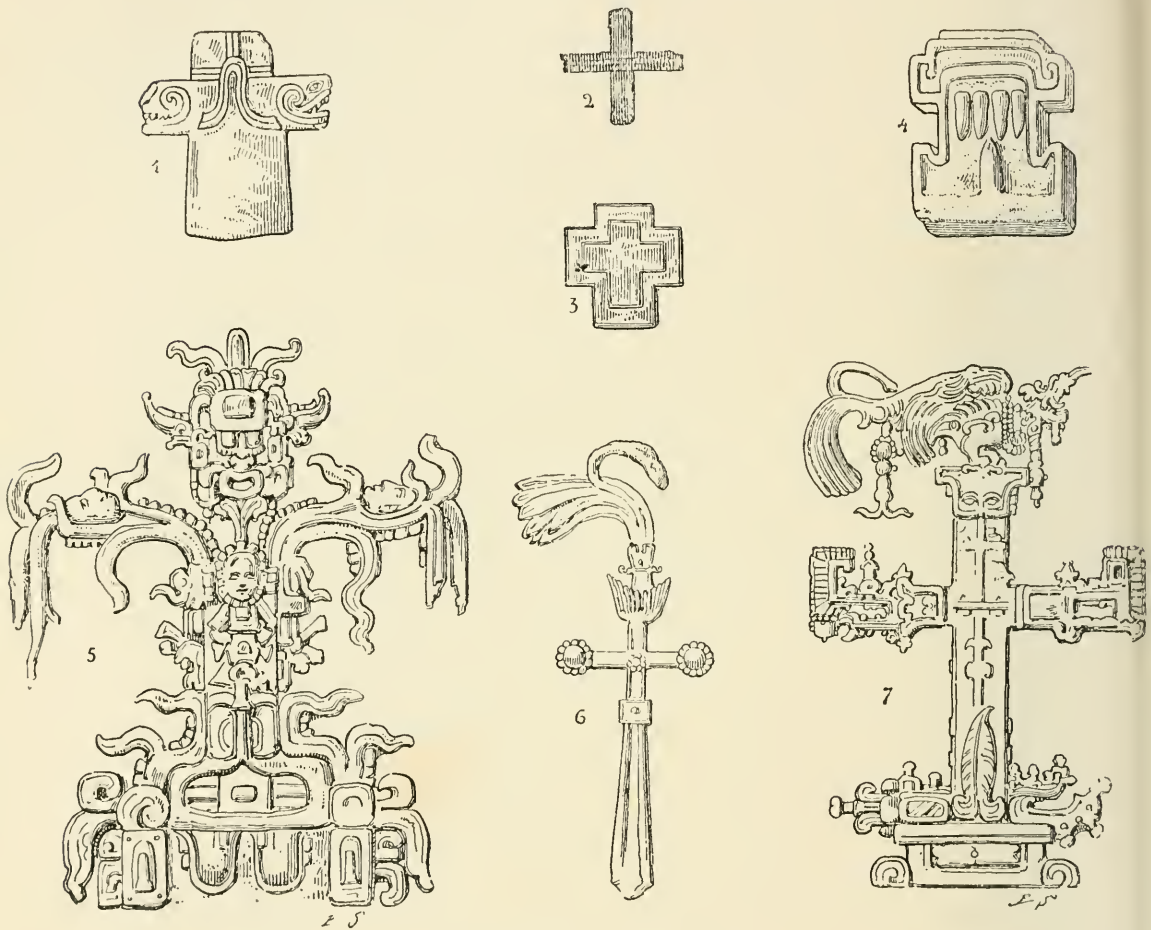
and enemy of the first, whose reigning family were the *Cocomes*, "auditors." The worship of Quetzalcoatl extended on the plateaux and in the peninsula, where the chiefs claimed to be descended from him. The symbol by which he is best known is "feathered serpent;" but he was severally called *Huemac*,* the "Strong Hand," the "white-bearded man," his mantle studded with crosses, or dressed in a tiger's skin; "god of air," when he was the companion of Tlaloc, whose path he swept, causing a strong wind to prevail before the rainy season; and also a youthful, beardless man, etc. The various attributes of Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc developed according to the people, the country, and epoch. Such transformations have been observed among all nations: in India the great Agni was at first but the spark produced by rubbing two pieces of wood together, which became cloud, dawn, the sun, the flash, Indra, etc. With the Greeks, Apollo was the god of light, poetry, music, medicine, etc. The Christian religion presents the same phenomenon: for we have the Ancient of Days, the Dove, the Lamb, the Vine. Thus Tlaloc, god of rain, is sometimes seen on ancient vases, his eyes circled with paper, his face running with water; or as an embryo cross, a perfect cross; and again in the form of a man lying on his back, supporting a vase to collect rain. The latter representation is found in Mexico, Tlaxcala, and Yucatan. Several writers† mention that crosses were found throughout Mexico, Yucatan, and Tabasco, being another and later personification of Tlaloc. They have all been lost; but we reproduce those found by us, presenting various distinct forms. The *cultus* of the cross is of great antiquity and almost universal, for we find it in Greece, in India, on pottery of the

* Torquemada, cap. xlv. This author follows the writers whom he quotes in their spelling of proper names, and the result is often great variety.

† Burgoa. Botturini. Tarabal. Clavigero, "Hist. Ant.," tome 1. p. 152.

Bronze Period (the suastica); whilst among the Slaves it was, as in America, the god of storm and rain.

The same may almost be said of the serpent.* It was



TOLTEC CROSSES.

No. 1, Serpent's Cross. No. 2, Cross seen on Quetzalcoat's Tunic and on the Palaces at Mitla. No. 3, Mayapan Cross. No. 4, Cross of Teotihuacan. Nos. 5 and 7, Crosses in the Temples of Palenque. No. 6, Cross met with in the Temples of Lorillard City.

reverenced in Egypt, in America, and is found at the beginning of Genesis; whilst in the north-west of India, the *Nagas* were serpent worshippers, whose great ancestor *Naga* was supposed

* Fergusson's "History of Indian Architecture," introd. p. 41.

to have been present at the Creation as Genius of the Ocean. He was the god of wisdom, the titular deity of mankind; and we find him at Bœroe-Bœdor, in Java, beautifully sculptured on a bas-relief, where Buddha is seen crossing the seas on a lotus-wreath, whilst close to him two immense serpents (Nagas) are



QUETZALCOATL, UNDER HIS BEST-KNOWN ATTRIBUTES.

raising their heads towards him in token of reverence. He is also worshipped in Cambodia, and his image is reproduced on the magnificent monuments of Angkor-Tom.

The festival which was celebrated in honour of Quetzalcoatl during the *teovihuittl*, "sacred year," was preceded by a severe fasting of eighty days, during which the priests devoted to his service were subjected to horrible penances. He reigned suc-

cessively at Izamal, in Yucatan, Chichen-Itza, and Mayapan, under the name of *Cukulcan*. To this god were ascribed the rites of confession and penance.

The religion of the Toltecs was mild, like their disposition; no human blood ever stained their altars, their offerings consisting of fruits, flowers, and birds; nevertheless, their laws, which were the same for all classes, were stringent and severe. Polygamy was forbidden, and kings themselves were not allowed concubines, whilst their priests were deserving of the respect which was shown them from prince and peasant alike. They had sculptors, mosaists, painters, and smelters of gold and silver; and by means of moulds knew how to give metals every variety of shape; their jewellers and lapidaries could imitate all manner of animals, plants, flowers, birds, etc. Cotton was spun by the women, and given a brilliant colouring both from animal and mineral substances; it was manufactured of every degree of fineness, so that some looked like muslin, some like cloth, and some like velvet. They had also the art of interweaving with these the delicate hair of animals and birds' feathers, which made a cloth of great beauty. Ixtlilxochitl* is afraid to pursue the panegyric of this people, lest it should appear exaggerated. Their calendar was adopted by all the tribes of Anahuac and Central America; it divided the year into eighteen months of twenty days each, adding five intercalary days to make up the full number of three hundred and sixty-five days; these belonged to no month, and were regarded as unlucky. Both months and days were expressed by peculiar signs; and as the year has nearly six hours in excess of three hundred and sixty-five days, they provided for this by intercalating six days at the end of four years, which formed leap year. *Tlapilli*, "knots," were cycles of thirteen years;

* Ixtlilxochitl, fourth "Relacion."

four of these cycles was a century, which they called *xiuhmolpilli*, "binding up of knots," represented by a quantity of reeds bound



COTTON SPINNING.

together. Besides the "bundle" of fifty-two years, the Toltecs had a larger cycle of one hundred and four years, called "a great

age," but not much used. The whole system rested on the repetition of the signs denoting the years, enabling one by means of dots to determine accurately to what cycle or what century each year belonged. And as these signs stood differently in each cycle, confusion was impossible; for the century being indicated by a number showing its place in the cycle, the dots would make it easy to determine to what age any given year belonged, according to its place at knot first, second, third, or fourth. Thus for instance, the year *tecpatl* "flint," *calli* "house," *tochtli* "rabbit," and *acatl* "reed," beginning the great cycle, would have one, five, nine, thirteen dots in the first series; four, eight, twelve, in the second; three, seven, fourteen, in the third; and two, six, ten, in the fourth series, which would come first in the new cycle, and the latter having its appropriate sign would enable one to see at once that "Flint" 12 was the twelfth year in the second series of the first cycle or century; that "Flint" 2 was the second year in the fourth series of the first cycle, etc. Example:

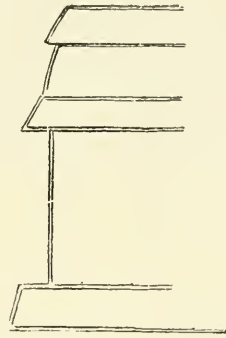
TLAPILLI.			
FIRST SERIES.		SECOND SERIES.	
1. Flint	6. House	10. House	1. House
·	:::	:::::	·
2. House	7. Rabbit	11. Rabbit	2. Rabbit
··	· · · · ·	· · · · · · ·	··
3. Rabbit	8. Reed	12. Reed	3. Reed
···	:::::	:::::::	···
4. Reed	9. Flint	13. Flint	4. Flint, etc.
::	· · · · ·	· · · · · · · · ·	····
5. Flint.			
·····			

It will be seen later that the hieroglyph *calli* is the outline of the Toltec palace and temple, the foundation of his architecture, which never varies, and which we shall find in all monuments, whether we travel north or south, on the plateaux or in the lowlands; so that had everything else been destroyed, we might

nevertheless pronounce with safety that all the monuments in North America were of Toltec origin. The genius of a nation, like that of an individual, has generally one dominant note, traceable through the various expressions of her art. India has *topes* and *pagodas*, Egypt *sphinxes* and hypostyle chambers, Greece three orders of columns. North America has only a plain wall ending with two projecting cornices having an upright or slanting frieze, more or less ornamented but of no appreciable difference.

A description of the ceremonies which took place at the end of every great cycle, will find here a natural place, and enable us to understand subsequent events.

The Aztecs celebrated their great festival of the new fire at the end of each century of fifty-two years, called by Sahagun *toxiuipilli*, and by others *xiuhmolpilli*. As the end of the century drew near they were filled with apprehension, for if the fire failed to be rekindled, a universal dissolution was expected to follow. In their despair at such a con-

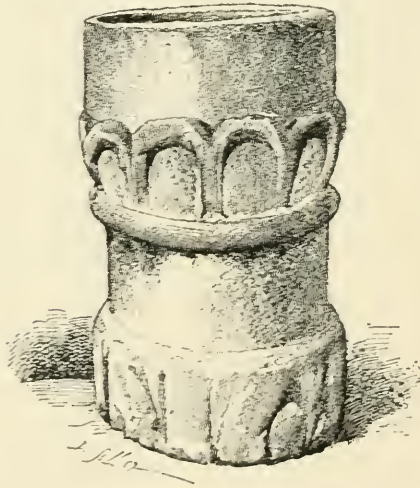


CALLI, IN PROFILE.

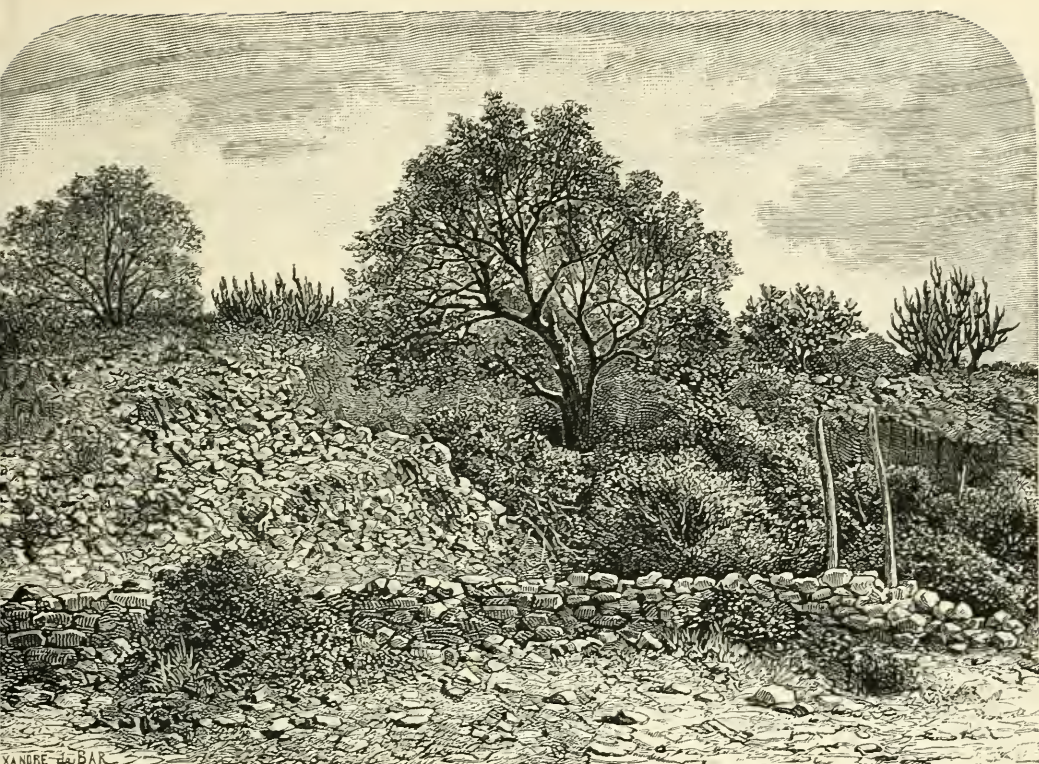
tingency they threw away their idols, destroyed their furniture and domestic utensils, and suffered all fires to go out. A lofty mountain near Iztapalapan, some two leagues from Mexico, was the place chosen for kindling the new fire, which was effected by the friction of two sticks placed on the breast of the victim. The fire was soon communicated to a funeral pile, on which the body of the victim was placed and consumed. This ceremony always took place at midnight, and as the light mounted up towards heaven shouts of joy burst forth from the multitudes who covered the hills, the house-tops, and terraces of the temples, their eyes directed towards the mountain of sacrifice. Couriers, with torches lighted at the blazing fire, rapidly bore them to the inhabitants of the surrounding districts, whilst every part of

the city was lighted with bonfires. The following days were given up to festivity, the houses were cleansed and whitewashed, the broken vessels were replaced by new ones, and the people dressed in their gayest apparel. If we except human sacrifice, this must have been a Toltec ceremony.*

* Sahagun, "Historia de las Cosas de la Nueva España," lib. vii. cap. x. to xiii.



CAPITAL, FOUND AT TULA.



THE PYRAMID OF THE SUN, TULA.

CHAPTER V.

TULA. PYRAMID OF THE SUN. ANTIQUITIES OF TULA.

Caryatides—Columns—Capitals—Carved Shell—Tennis-ring—Tlachtli—Ancient Bas-reliefs—Toltecs Portrayed—Historical Jottings—The Temple of the Frog—Indian Vault—The Plaza—El Cerro del Tesoro.

TULA extended over a plain intersected by a muddy river winding round the foot of Mount Coatepetl, which commanded the city. The modern town occupies but a small proportion of the area of the ancient capital, and the few antiquities that adorn the plaza were found in clearing the river of some of its mud or whilst ploughing the adjacent fields.

First in order are three fragments of caryatides: one, a gigantic

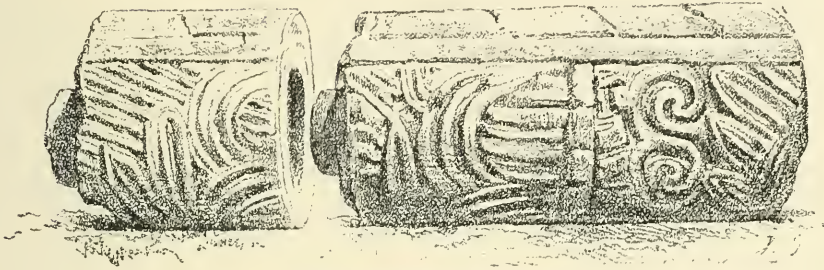
statue which we reproduce, is about 7 ft. high; the head and upper part of the body below the hips are wanting, the legs are 1 ft. 3 in. in diameter, and the feet 4 ft. long. The two embroidered bits below the waist were no doubt the ends of the royal *maxtli*, the exact copy of which we shall see later on



TOLTEC CARYATID, TULA.

bas-reliefs in Chiapas, Palenque, and Lorillard City. The greaves, of leather bands, are passed between the toes and fastened on the instep and above it by large knots, recalling the Roman *cacles*. This statue is of black basalt, like all the other fragments; and although exceedingly rude and archaic in character, is not

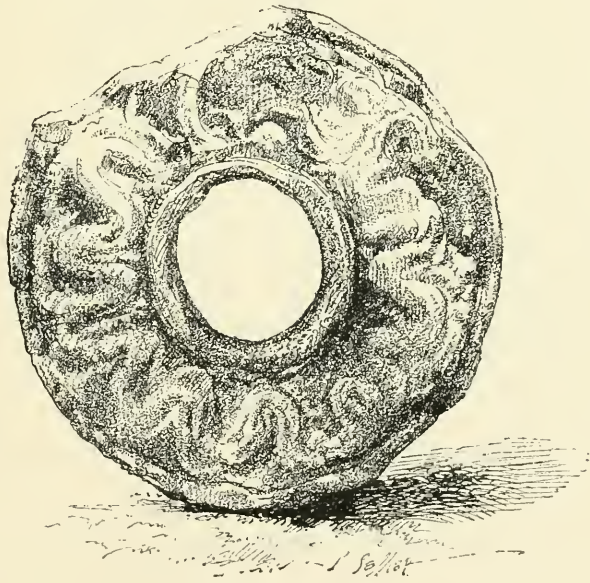
wanting in beauty in some of its details. Next comes a column in two pieces, lying on the ground, having a round tenon which



PARTS OF A COLUMN, TULA.

fitted closely into the mortise and ensured solidity ; it is the only specimen we have found where such care had been bestowed.

The carving on the outward portion of the column consists of feathers or palms, whilst the reverse is covered with scales of serpents arranged in parallel sections. This fragment answers Sahagun's description about the columns of a temple dedicated to Quetzalcoatl, already mentioned, where rattle-



TENNIS-RING, TULA.

snakes formed the ornamentation. It is also interesting from the fact that we shall see a similar column at Chichen-Itza in a temple of the same god. Here also among other fragments I noticed a Greek column with a Doric capital, but on which I dare

not pronounce definitely, although there is nothing else in the place denoting Spanish influence. All we can say is that it shows the marvellous building instinct of the Toltecs, and that we found some remains of a like description in the Yucatan peninsula. By far the most interesting object seen here, on account of the study and the archæological issues it entails, is a large carved stone ring about 6 ft. 5 in. in diameter, having a hole in the centre some 10 in. in circumference, evidently a tennis-ring. Tennis, *tlacheo*, *tlachtli*, was first known in Anahuac and transmitted to the Chichimecs, Acolhuans, and Aztecs by the Toltecs, who carried it with them to Tabasco, Yucatan, Uxmal, and Chichen; and in the latter place we found a perfect tennis-court with one ring still in place.

We must turn to Torquemada* for full particulars respecting this national game, which was played in buildings of so typical a character as to be easily recognised. It consists of two thick parallel walls 32 ft. high, at a distance of 98 ft. from each other, having a ring fixed in the walls 22 ft. high, as seen in our cut; whilst at each extremity of the court stood a small temple in which preliminary ceremonies were performed before opening the game. It was played with a large india-rubber ball; the rules required the player to receive it behind, not to let it touch the ground, and to wear a tight-fitting leather suit to make the ball rebound. But the greatest feat was to send the ball through the ring, when a scramble, a rush, and much confusion followed, the winner having the right to plunder the spectators of their valuables. Sending the ball through the ring required so much dexterity, that he who succeeded was credited with a bad conscience or supposed to be doomed to an early death. Tennis seems to have been in such high repute with the Indians that it was not confined to individuals, but also played between one city and another, and

* Torquemada, "Monarquía Indiana," lib. II. cap. xii.

accompanied, says Veytia, by much betting, when they staked everything they possessed, even their liberty. But this writer errs in ascribing the game to the Aztecs in honour of their god Huitzilopochtli, as we shall show.

Among other objects which we found at Tula is a large curiously-carved shell of mother-of-pearl; the carving recalls Tizoc's stone, and notably the bas-reliefs at Palenque and Ocosingo in Chiapas; also two bas-reliefs, one in a rock outside the town, the other, by far the most valuable, in the wall of a private house, but very old and much injured, representing a full-face figure and another in profile; their nose, beard, and dress are similar to those described by



WARRIOR'S PROFILE, FOUND AT TULA.

Veytia* in the following passage: "The Toltecs were above middle height, and owing to this they could be distinguished in later times from the other aborigines. Their complexion was clear, their hair thicker than the nations who followed them, although less so than the Spaniards. This is

* Veytia, tome i. chap. xxxiv.

still observable among the few who remain claiming Toltec descent."

These remains are priceless in every respect because of their analogy and intimate connection with all those we shall subsequently discover, forming the first links in the chain of evidence respecting our theory of the unity of American civilisation, which it is our object to prove in the course of this work.

On beholding these caryatides, the question naturally arises as to what monument they were intended for; and in turning to Veytia,* we read that under the Emperor Mitl (979—1035) the Toltecs reached the zenith of their power; that their empire extended over one thousand miles, bordering on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; and that the population was so dense as to cause the soil to be cultivated on the highest mountains, whilst an influential priesthood performed the sacred rites within innumerable sanctuaries. The great cities of the high plateaux were Teotihuacan and Cholula, as later Palenque, Izamal, and Cozumel were those of the warm region. This emperor, jealous of the flourishing state and religious superiority of Teotihuacan, "the habitation of the gods," wished to set up a new and rival deity for the veneration of his people; to this end he chose the songstress of the marsh, the "Frog," whom he presented as the goddess of waters. And that the new deity should be ushered in with due pomp and solemnity, he had a magnificent temple built in her honour, and her gold statue placed within the temple, covered with emeralds, the size of a palm, and cunningly worked so as to imitate nature. Up to that time, temples had been large mounds erected on the summits of mountains, like that of Tlaloc, or on artificial pyramids like that of Teotihuacan, where the idols were ex-

* Veytia, tome 1. chap. xxxiv.

posed to the elements; that of the Frog was the first which was built with stones and given a *rectangular shape*, having a *kind of solid vault* (boveda), also of stone, *which by a skilful arrangement covered the whole edifice*.* Here, then, we have a



TOLTEC BAS-RELIEFS.

very plain description of the Indian vault, the Yucatec vault, a vault we have observed in the north and the whole extent of our Toltec journey; seen by Guillemin Tarayre in the tombs at Las Casas Grandes, mentioned by Ixtlilxochitl as the dis-

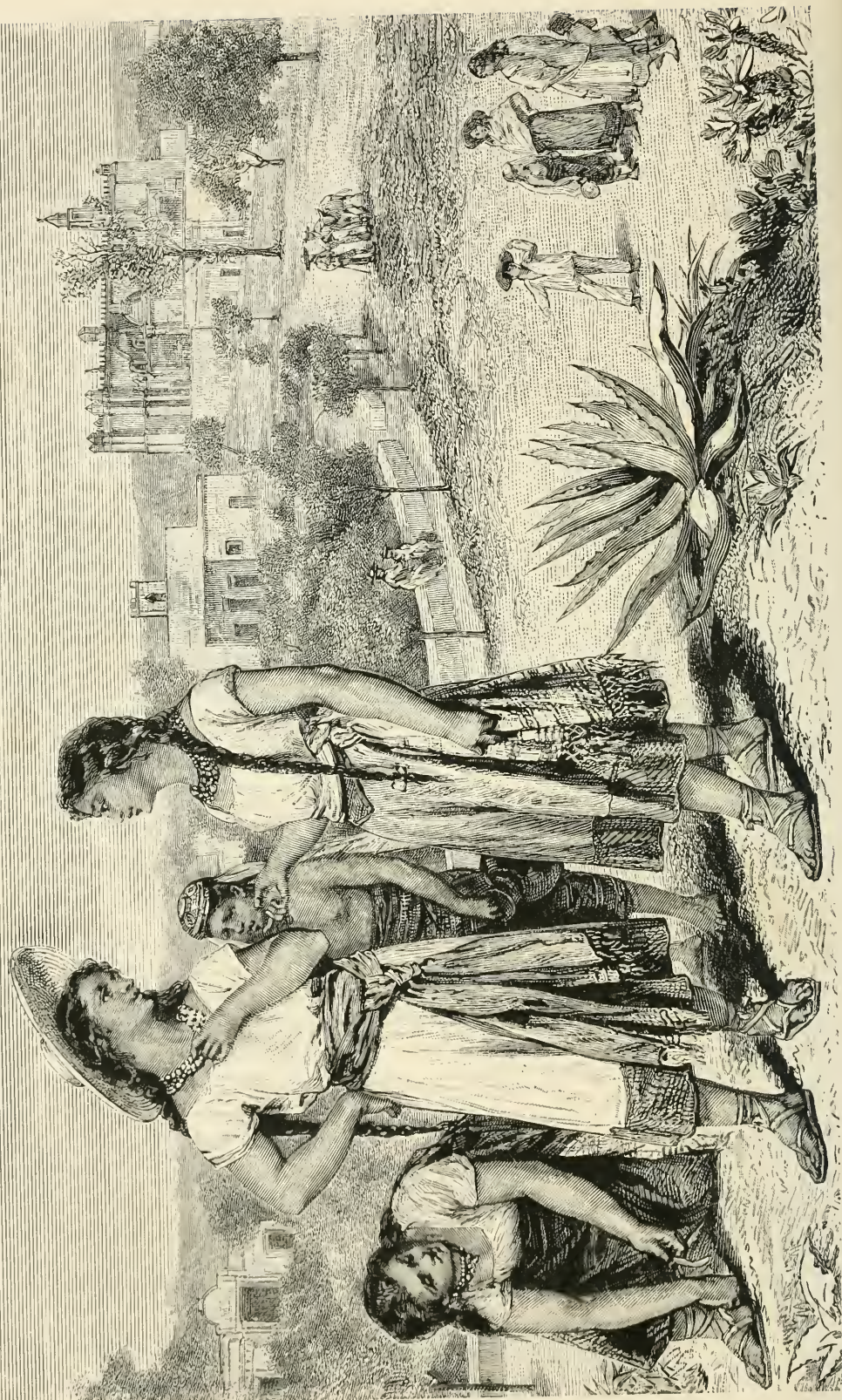
* Mariano Veytia, tome I. chap. xxviii.

tinguishing feature in the monuments of Toluca and Cuernavaca, and by Humboldt at Cholula in the following passage: "On visiting the interior of the pyramid, I recognised a mortuary chamber, having the bricks of the ceiling so arranged as to diminish the pression of the roof. As the aborigines were unacquainted with the vault, they provided for it by placing horizontally and in gradual succession very large bricks, the upper slightly overlapping the lower, and in this way replaced the Gothic vault."* This remarkable writer further says, that "Yucatan and Guatemala are countries where the people had come from Atylan and reached a certain degree of civilisation."† Far greater would have been his appreciation, had his investigations been directed to the Toltecs and Central America, where the overlapping vault was introduced by them in all public edifices, temples, and palaces. With the testimony of these writers, we may consider the vault question definitely settled.

The town, or rather the plaza, with its diminutive garden, planted with a few consumptive shrubs and flowers, with its porticoes giving access to the Town Hall, the Law Courts, the Church and shops, only gets animated on Sundays and market-days, when the population of the surrounding districts pours in for the purpose of buying or selling. Except meat, all articles are sold on the ground, spread on plantain leaves or clean cloths; where vendors dispose themselves in long rows about the plaza, offering their goods, crockery, and fruit. Customers stand about in groups, surveying the animated scene, enjoying a little gossip, or trying to drive a hard bargain; whilst Indian matrons ply from one vendor to another in almost silent dignity, accompanied by their daughters, who look at this

* Humboldt, "Vue des Cordillères," p. 29.

† *Id.*, p. 27.

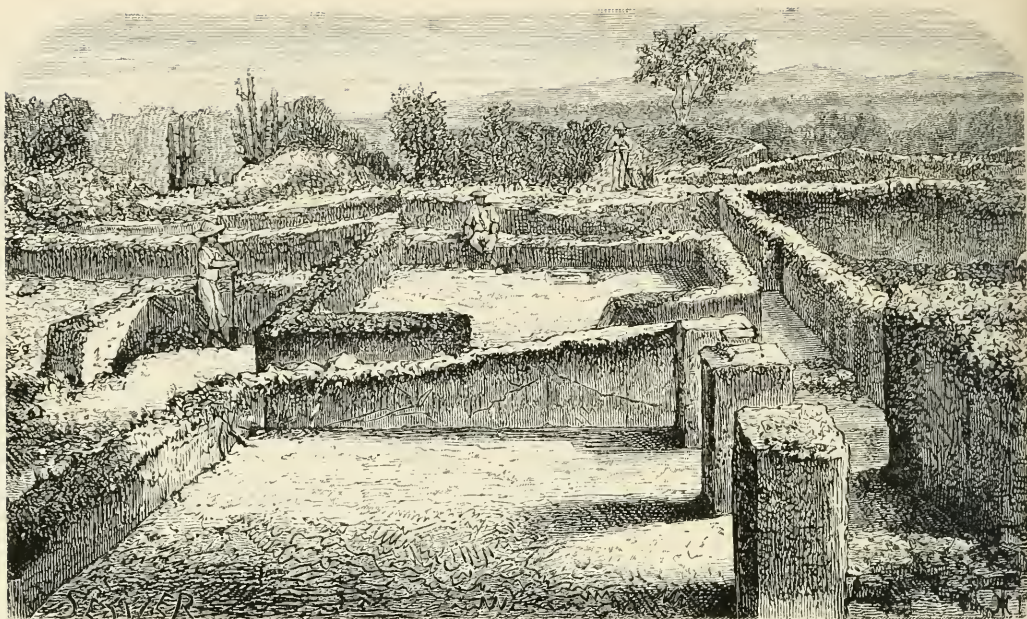


YOUNG GIRLS OF TULA.

and handle that, sometimes with the intention of buying, often to exchange a few words with the merchant or an acquaintance. Some look quite pretty, with their glorious eyes, their long hair reaching below the waist in two long plaits, with glass or stone beads around their necks; their scanty costume leaving uncovered their shapely arms, necks, and ankles. On looking at them, I seem to myself to be carried back a thousand years amidst that grand old race whose ruins I am here to study. Further on, under a monumental ash-tree, primitive kitchens have been set up, round which a dense throng of customers, settled on the ground, are enjoying their *tortillas*, or when they are well-to-do, their portion of black beans, *frijoles*, pork or turkey, in *jicaras*, the whole highly seasoned with Chili pepper; the best dinner not costing more than threepence.

Every human type seems to have congregated here, from the Egyptian sharp outline of features to the flat-nosed, flat-faced Kalmuk. Most women are bare to the waist; but as this seems a matter of course, no one notices it.

The area of ancient Tula has now been under cultivation for three hundred years—hardly a desirable condition for the explorer. We know that the city stood here; but its only vestiges are to be found on the hill overlooking the town to the north. It was called *Palpan* in the time of the Toltecs; but now it is known as *Cerro del Tesoro*, because a poor shepherd-boy, some twenty years since, whilst scratching the moist ground, discovered a vase with five hundred gold ounces in it; but not knowing the value of his newly-found treasure, he parted with it for a few coppers. We are going to try our luck on the same hill; and better advised than the poor shepherd, we shall not give up our discoveries in favour of any one.



RUINS OF A TOLTEC HOUSE.

CHAPTER VI.

PALPAN AND THE TOLTECS.

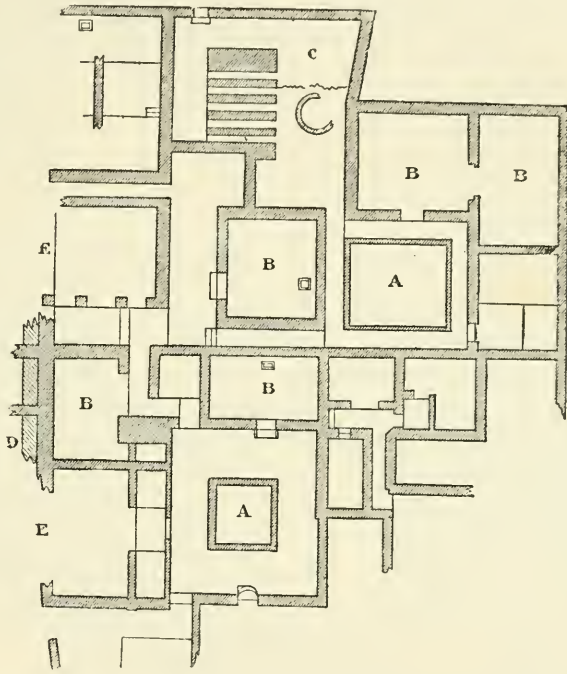
Aspect of the Hill—Mogotes—The Toltecs and their Building Propensities—A Toltec House—Antiquities—Fragments—*Malacates*—Toltec Palace—Toltec Organisation—Dress—Customs—Education—Marriage—Orders of Knighthood—Philosophy—Religion—Future Life—Pulque—End of the Toltec Empire—Emigration.

THE plateau on the Palpan hill, of which we give a ground plan, was occupied by a royal park, and maybe those of a few notables. Its direction is south-west, north-west, about a mile in length and half-a-mile in breadth, growing to a point towards the south-west, and fenced on two sides by a natural wall of perpendicular rocks overhanging the river. The plateau is covered with mounds, pyramids, and esplanades, showing that here were the royal villas, temples, and public edifices, but no trace of building, wall, or ruin, is visible, for the whole area is shrouded with immense

cactuses, nopals, gorambullos, gum-trees, and mesquites, amongst which towers the *biznaga*, a cactus which grows here to nearly 10 ft. high by 6 ft. wide. I was shown a plant of this kind near Pachuca, in which an Indian couple have established themselves.

The summits of pyramids, called *mogotes* by the natives, were always occupied by temples and palaces; the largest here, No. 4 and No. 5 in our cut, must have served as basements for the temples of the Sun and Moon. Unfortunately they have been opened and ransacked by treasure-seekers, and half-demolished by bricklayers, who found here materials ready to hand for their constructions.

I began my excavations by sounding the small mound No. 1 to the north-east, where the side



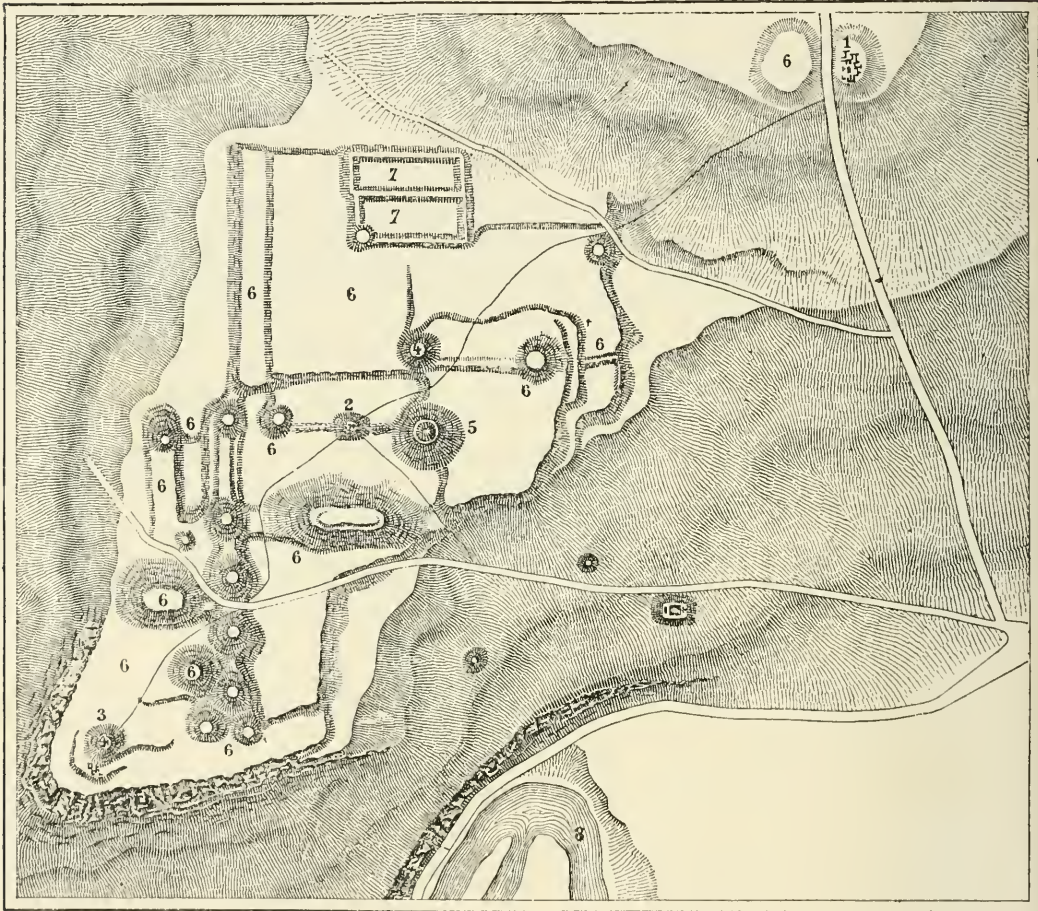
GROUND PLAN OF FIRST TOLTEC HOUSE UNEARTHED AT TULA
(FROM LEMAIRE).

A, Cisterns. B, Various Apartments. C, Kitchen.
D, Seats. E, Entrance.

of a wall was visible; and I found everywhere the ground connecting houses, palaces, and gardens, thickly coated with cement; but in the inner rooms the flooring was of red cement. The rubbish was cleared away, and in a few days a complete house was unearthed, consisting of several apartments of various size, nearly all on different levels; having frescoed walls, columns, pilasters, benches, and cisterns, recalling a Roman *impluvium*,

whilst flights of steps and narrow passages connected the various apartments. We had brought to light a Toltec house!

I picked out of the rubbish many curious things: huge baked bricks, from one foot to nine inches by two and two and a half



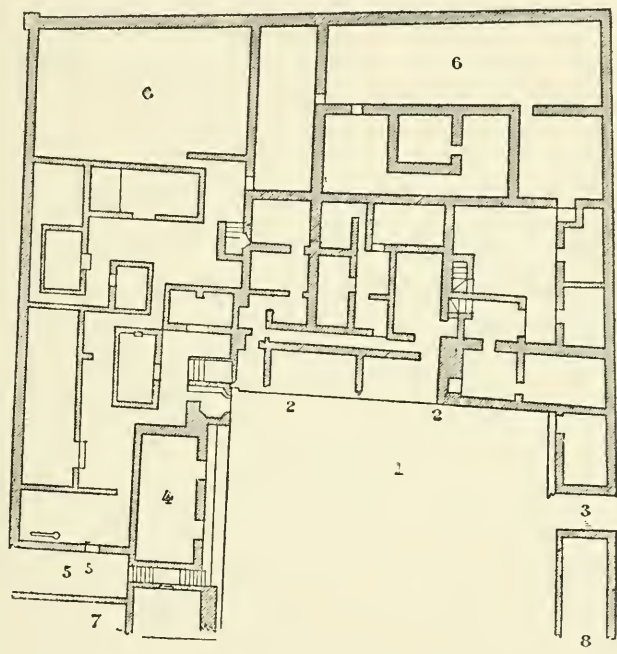
PLAN OF THE HILL AT TULA (ANCIENT PALFAN).

No. 1, Excavations of Toltec House. No. 2, Tomb Excavated. No. 3, Palace Excavations. Nos. 4 and 5, Pyramids of Sun and Moon. No. 6, Esplanades and Mounds, Sites of Ancient Dwellings. No. 7, Tlachtli, Tennis-Court. No. 8, Tula River.

in thickness; filters, straight and curved water-pipes, vases and fragments of vases, enamelled terra-cotta cups, bringing to mind those at Tenenepanco; seals, one of which (an eagle's head) I had engraved for my personal use; bits which were curiously like old

Japanese china ; moulds, one having a head with a huge plait and hair smoothed on both sides of her face, like an old maid ; besides innumerable arrow-heads and knives of obsidian strewn the ground. In fact, a whole civilisation.

This house, the first it was our fortune to discover, was built on a somewhat modified natural elevation ; the various apartments follow the direction of the ground and are ranged on different levels, numbering from zero elevation for the lowest to 8 ft. for the highest. The walls are perpendicular, the roofs flat ; and a thick coating of cement, the same everywhere, was used, whether for roofs, ceilings, floors, pavements, or roads.



GROUND PLAN OF TOLTEC PALACE UNEARTHED AT TULA (LEMAIRE).

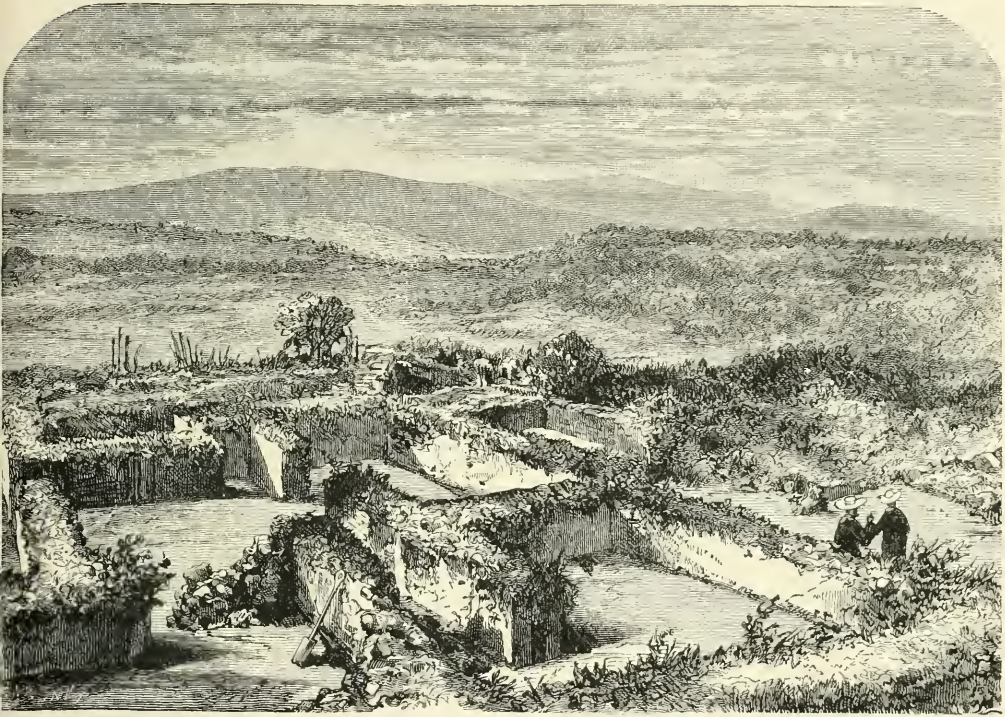
No. 1, Principal Court. No. 2, Façade. No. 3, Entrance. No. 4, Reception Apartment. No. 5, Ruined Wall. No. 6, Enclosures for Animals. No. 7, Right Wing of the Palace. No. 8, Left Wing.

On examining the monuments at Tula, we are filled with admiration for the marvellous building capacity of the people who erected them ; for, unlike most primitive nations, they used every material at once. They coated their inner walls with mud and mortar, faced their outer walls with baked bricks and cut stone, had wooden roofs, and brick and stone staircases. They were

acquainted with pilasters (we found them in their houses), with caryatides, with square and round columns ; indeed, they seem to have been familiar with every architectural device. That they were painters and decorators we have ample indications in the house we unearthed, where the walls are covered with rosettes, palms, red, white, and gray geometrical figures on a black ground.

My next soundings were towards the centre of the hill, at a mound marked No. 2, which I took at first for a tomb ; but finding nothing, I directed my men south-east, at the extremity of the hill, No. 3. Here we attacked a pyramid of considerable size, thickly covered with vegetation, having a hole and a thick plaster coating, which, to my extreme delight, revealed an old palace, extending over an area of nearly 62 ft. on one side, with an inner courtyard, a garden, and numerous apartments on different levels, ranged from the ground-floor to 8 ft. high, exactly like the first house ; the whole covering a surface of 2,500 square yards. We will give a description of it, together with the probable use of the various apartments. No. 1 (see plan) is the inner courtyard, which we take as our level ; No. 3 to the right, paved with large pebbles, is the main entrance. Facing this to the left, No. 7 is a small room about 4 ft. high, which was entered by a flight of seven low steps ; it is a Belvedere, from which a view of the whole valley could be obtained. Next comes No. 4, perhaps a reception-room, 32 ft. long, having two openings towards the court. On the other side, to the north, is a smaller, narrower Belvedere, from which an ante-room, on a slightly lower level, furnished with benches, was reached. The main body of the palace consists of ten apartments of different size, with stuccoed walls and floors. The façade, No. 2, 8 ft. high, opens on the courtyard ; whilst two winding stone staircases to the right, and an equal number to the left, led to the apartments on the first storey. Brick steps, covered with a deep layer of cement,

connected the various chambers. The cells on both sides of the main apartments may have been the servants' quarters. No. 6, No. 6, are a kind of yards, without any trace of roof, and if we are to judge from Aztec dwellings, they were probably enclosures for domestic and wild animals. The Americans, says Clavigero,* had no flocks; nevertheless their table was well



VIEW OF RUINED TOLTEC PALACE.

supplied by innumerable animals to be found about their dwellings, and unknown to Europe; whilst the poor people had an edible dog, *techichi*, the breed of which was lost by the abuse the Spaniards made of it in the early times of the Conquest. Royal palaces had extensive spaces reserved for turkeys, ducks, and every species of volatile, a menagerie for wild animals, chambers for reptiles and birds of prey, and tanks for fish; so

* Clavigero, tome 1. lib. vii. p. 224.

that the purpose we ascribe to these enclosures becomes highly probable. Here and there closed-up passages, walls rebuilt with materials other than those employed in the older construction, seem to indicate that the palace was occupied at two different periods; this would agree with Veytia* when he says, "that on the Chichimecs invading the country under the command of *Xolotl*, they found Tula (*cir.* 1117) deserted, and grass growing in the streets; but that the King was so pleased with the site that he ordered the monuments to be repaired and the town inhabited. He followed the same policy at Teotihuacan and other places, ordering his people to preserve old names, and only authorising them to give new appellations to those they should build themselves."

The building we unearthed is entire, its outer wall intact; presenting a valuable specimen of the houses dating long before the Conquest. Here we found the same kind of objects as in our first excavations: plates, dishes, three-footed cups having striated bottoms and used for grinding Chili pepper; fragments of pottery, enamels, terra-cotta whorls of different size covered with sunk designs having a hole in the centre. These whorls are called "*malacates*" by the natives, and used by Indian women to this day. A round piece of wood or spindle-stick is introduced in the hole of the whorl, projecting about five inches from the lower plane, and about nine inches from the upper. The spinner, who is sitting, rests the point of her spindle on a varnished plate, and impels it round with her thumb and forefinger, twisting the cotton or wool attached thereto.† In Mexico, rich ladies used a golden plate.§

* Veytia, tome II. chap. i.

† *Ibid.* chap. ii.

‡ Similar spindles, with whorls attached, have been found in Egypt and the Swiss Lakes.

§ Sahagun, "Hist. de las Cosas de España," lib. ix. cap. v.

The edifice No. 7 is undoubtedly a tennis-court, for it answers exactly the description given by historians of such structures; moreover, I found one of the rings still in place. Veytia is wrong, therefore, in crediting the Mexicans with the invention of the game; were it so we should not have found a tennis-court at Chichen-Itza. Mendieta* relates how Tezacatlipoca came down from his celestial abode on a spider's ladder, and how in his long peregrinations on earth he visited Tula, brought thither by his jealousy of Quetzalcoatl, whom he challenged to play tennis; but the latter turning into a tiger discomfited him utterly. The spectators were so terrified that they fled, and in the tumult which ensued many were drowned *in the river flowing close by*.

This tradition shows plainly that tennis existed in the remote period of Quetzalcoatl's rule at Tula; that the game was of Toltec origin, that the court was on the hill, since the spectators in their precipitancy to run away were drowned, that Quetzalcoatl was a good tennis-player, and that the expression, "he was turned into a tiger," is merely honorific, applied to him on the spot for having sent his ball through the ring. This passage also explains the tiger frieze over the tennis-court at Chichen-Itza.

The Toltecs had public granaries which were opened to the people in time of famine. A passage in Cuauhtitlan seems to indicate that the resistance they opposed to a grasping and bloodthirsty priesthood, was one of the chief causes of their downfall.† "Under the mild rule of Quetzalcoatl, demons tried in vain to persuade him to allow *men born at Tula to be sacrificed*. As for himself, his offerings were birds, serpents, and butterflies he had captured in the valley."

* Mendieta, "Hist. Eccles. Indiana," lib. II. cap. v.

† Cuauhtitlan's Annals, translated by Sanchez Solis, "Annals of the Mexican Museum."

The Toltecs were peaceful, their organisation was feudal and aristocratic, indicative of conquest, yet their government was paternal. Besides the great feudatory lords, they had military orders and titles, which were bestowed on distinguished soldiers for services in the field or the council, and finally the celebrated order of the *Tecuhtlis*, which was divided in sub-orders of the "tiger," the "lion," the "eagle," and other animals, each having its peculiar privileges. The initiatory ceremonies resembled somewhat those attending our knights of the Middle Ages, and may interest the reader.

At the nomination of a candidate, all the tecuhtlis assembled in the house of the new knight, whence they set out in a body for the temple, where the high priest, at the request of the neophyte, perforated his nose and ears with a pointed tiger's bone, or an eagle's claw, inserting in the holes thus made twigs, which were changed every day for larger ones, until the healing of the wound; pronouncing the while invocations to the gods that they would give the novice the courage of the lion, the swiftness of the deer, etc.; followed by a speech in which he was reminded that he who aspires to the dignity of a tecuhtli, must be ready to perform the duties of his new office. He was henceforth to be distinguished by greater meekness, patience, forbearance, and moderation in all things, together with submission to the laws. After this speech, he was deprived of his rich garments, and dressed in a coarse tunic; the only articles of furniture allowed him were a common mat and a low stool. He was besmeared with a black preparation, and only broke his fast once in twenty-four hours with a tortilla and a small quantity of water. Meanwhile the priests and tecuhtlis came in turns to feast before the novice, and make his fast more intolerable, heaping insults and injurious epithets

upon the man who stood meekly before them; jostling and pointing their fingers jeeringly at him. At night he was only allowed to sleep a few minutes at a time; and if overcome by sleep, his guardians pricked him with the thorn of the maguey.

“At the expiration of sixty days the new knight, accompanied by friends and relatives, repaired to some temple of his own district, where he was received by the whole order of tecuhtlis, ranged in two rows on each side of the temple, from the main altar down to the entrance. He advanced alone, bowing right and left to each tecuhtli, until he reached the idol, where the mean garments he had worn so long were taken off by the oldest tecuhtli, his hair bound up in a knot on the top of his head with a red string; whilst a wreath, having a medallion with his motto graven on it, circled his brow. He was next clad in rich and fine apparel, ornamented and delicately embroidered; in his hands he received arrows and a bow; balls of gold were inserted in his ears and nostrils, and a precious stone, the distinctive badge of his order, hung from his lower lip. The ceremony ended with another discourse to the effect that the neophyte should aim at being liberal, just, free from arrogance, and willing to devote his life to the service of his country and his gods.” *

The Toltecs paid great attention to the instruction of youth. Texcuco possessed schools of art, in which the broad principles laid down by their forefathers were doubtless remembered, differing from those of the Aztecs, whose exaggerated religiosity caused them to leave the education of children entirely in the hands of the priests. That the latter were less influential with the Toltecs seems indicated in the following passage: “Among the various sumptuous edifices at Utatlan was the college, having a

* Veytia, tome I. chap. ix.

staff of seventy teachers, and five or six thousand pupils, who were educated at the public expense.”* The truth of this account is borne out by the fact that the city was only destroyed in 1524 by Alvarado, so that the early missionaries had ample opportunity given them to collect materials for a trustworthy history.

Marriage among the Toltecs was celebrated with ceremonies it may interest the reader to know something about. On this



FEMALE DANCERS AND TECUHTLIS, FROM RAMIREZ MS. AND FATHIER DURAN.

No. 1, Knight of the Kite. No. 2, Knight of the Tiger. No. 3, Teponaztli. No. 4, Huehuatl.
No. 5, Knight of the Eagle.

occasion friends and relations were invited, the walls of the best apartment were adorned with pretty devices, made with flowers and evergreens, whilst every table and bracket was covered with them. The bridegroom occupied a seat to the right, the bride sat on the floor to the left of the hearth, which stood in the middle of the room, where a bright fire was burning. Then the “marriage-

* Juarros, “Compendio de la Hist. de la Ciudad de Guatemala,” tome 1. p. 87.

maker," as he was called, stood up and addressed the young people, reminding them of their mutual duties in the life they were about to enter, and, at the termination of his speech, they were given new cloaks, and received the good wishes and congratulations of their friends, who as they came up threw each in turn some perfume on the hearth. Now the bride and bridegroom were crowned with chaplets of flowers, and the day was wound up with dance, music, and refreshments. There was also a religious ceremony similar to this in all respects, in which a priest officiated; when instead of cloaks they put on costly dresses with a skeleton head embroidered on them, and thus attired, the new married couple were accompanied to their home and left to themselves.*

In order to have a complete idea of this extraordinary people, a few words upon their philosophy and ethics may find an appropriate place here. A Toltec maiden, about to enter into life, was admonished with great tenderness by her father to preserve simplicity in her manners and conversation, to have great neatness in attire and attention to personal cleanliness. He inculcated modesty, faithfulness, and obedience to her husband, reminding her that this world is a place of sorrow and disappointment, but that God had given as a compensation domestic joys and material enjoyments; softening his advice by such endearing words as: "daughter mine, my beloved daughter, my precious," etc. Nor was the advice of a mother less touching—breathing throughout a parent's love: "My beloved daughter, my little dove, you have heard the words which your father has told you. They are precious words, such as are rarely spoken, and which have proceeded from his heart. Speak calmly and deliberately; do not raise your voice very high, nor speak very low, but in a moderate tone. Neither

* Veytia, tome II. chap. iii.

mince, when you speak, nor when you salute, nor speak through your nose ; but let your words be proper, and your voice gentle. In walking, see that you behave becomingly, neither going with haste, nor too slowly ; yet, when it is necessary to go with haste, do so. When you are obliged to jump over a pool of water, do it with decency. Walk through the streets quietly ; do not look hither and thither, nor turn your head to look at this and that ; walk neither looking at the skies nor at the ground. See likewise that you neither paint your face nor your lips, in order to look well, since this is a mark of vile and immodest women. But that your husband may take pleasure in you, adorn yourself, wash yourself, and wear nothing but clean clothes, but let this be done with moderation, since if you are over nice—too delicate—they will call you *tapetzeton*, *tinemaxoch*. This was the course and the manner of your ancestors. In this world it is necessary to live with prudence and circumspection. See that you guard yourself carefully and free from stain, for should you give your favour to another who is not your husband, you would be ruined past all recall ; since for such a crime they will kill you, throw you into the street for an example to all the people, where your head will be crushed and dragged upon the ground," etc.*

We will end these quotations by the advice to a son : " My beloved son, lay to heart the words I am going to utter, for they are from our forefathers, who admonished us to keep them locked up like precious gold-leaf, and taught us that boys and girls are beloved of the Lord. For this reason the men of old, who were devoted to His service, held children in great reverence. They roused them out of their sleep, undressed them, bathed them in cold water, made them sweep the temples and offer copal to the gods. They washed their mouths, saying that

* Sahagun, lib. vi. cap. xix.



YOUNG TOLTEC GIRL, FROM MODERN INDIAN TYPES AND FATHER DURAN'S "HIST. DE LAS INDIAS."

God heard their prayers and accepted their exercises, their tears, and their sorrow, because they were of a pure heart, perfect, and without blemish, like *chalchihuitl* (precious stones). They added that this world was preserved for their sake, and that they were our intercessors before Him. Satraps, wise men, and those killed by lightning were supposed to be particularly agreeable to the Sun, who called them to himself that they might live for ever in his presence in a perpetual round of delight," etc.*

And what can be more beautiful than the prayer addressed to Tlaloc: "O Lord, liberal giver of all things, Lord of freshness and verdure, Lord of sweet-smelling paradise, Lord of incense and copal. Alas! your vassals, the gods of water, have disappeared, and lie concealed in their deep caverns, having stowed away all things indispensable to life, although they continue to receive the *ulli yauhtli* and copal offering. They have also carried away their sister, the goddess of substance. O Lord, have pity on us that live. Our food goes to destruction, is lost and dried up for lack of water; it is as if turned to dust and mixed with spiders' webs. Wilt thou have no pity on the *macehuetes* and the common people, who are wasted with hunger, and go about unrecognisable and disfigured? They are blue under the eyes as with death; their mouths are dry as sedge; all the bones of their bodies show as in a skeleton. The children are disfigured and yellow as earth; not only those that begin to walk, but even those in the cradle. This torment of hunger comes to every one; the very animals and birds suffer from dire want. It is pitiful to see the birds, some dragging themselves along with drooping wings, others falling down unable to walk, and others with their mouth still open

* Sahagun, lib. vi. cap. xxi.

through hunger and thirst. O Lord, Thou wert wont to give us abundantly of those things which are the life and joy of all the world, and precious as emeralds and sapphires; all these things have departed from us. O Lord God of nourishment, most kind and compassionate, what hast Thou determined to do with us? Hast Thou utterly forsaken us? Shall not Thy wrath and indignation be appeased? Wilt Thou destroy these Thy servants, and leave this city and kingdom desolate and uninhabited? Is it so decreed in heaven and hades? O Lord, grant, at least, that these innocent children, who cannot so much as walk, and those still in the cradle, may have something to eat, so that they may live and die not in this terrible famine. What have they done that they should be so tried, and should die of hunger? They have committed no iniquity, neither do they know what thing it is to sin; they neither offended the gods of heaven nor the gods of hell. We, if we have offended in many things, if our sins have reached heaven and hades and the uttermost parts of the world, it is but just that we should be destroyed. O Lord, invigorate the corn and other substances, much wished for and much needed, now sown and planted; for the ridges of the earth suffer sore need and anguish from lack of water. Grant, O Lord, that the people receive this favour and mercy at Thine hand; let them see and enjoy the verdure and coolness which are as precious stones. See good that the fruit and the substance of the Tlalocs be given, which are the clouds that these gods carry with them and that give us rain. May it please Thee, O Lord, that the animals and herbs be made glad, and that the fowls and birds of precious feather, such as the *quechottl* and the *çaquan*, fly and sing and feast upon the herbs and flowers. And let not this come about with thunder and lightning, symbols of Thy wrath; for if our lords

the Tlalocs come in this way, the people, being lean and very weak with hunger, would be terrified." *

The degree of culture of a nation can be gauged from its religion, and notably its ideas of a future life. The beauty and eloquence-loving Greek discoursed upon philosophy walking under noble porticoes; the thoughts of the barbarous worshipper of Woden were of bloody fights, and of wassail in which he drank hydromel out of his enemies' skulls; the Arab goes to sleep cradled on the lap of houris; the Red Indian dreams of endless hunting-fields, whilst the starving Bushman hopes for a heaven of plenty. The Toltec is the only one whose aspirations beyond the grave are free from grossness and cruelty; his heaven is a resting-place for the weary, a perpetual spring, amidst flowers, fields of yellow maize, verdure and flowers.

From these graver matters we will pass to the legend, told by Veytia, which makes Papantzin the inventor of pulque; and although, in our opinion, he places this event too late, it is none the less instructive as showing another side of Toltec history. In the year 1049, or, according to Clavigero, 1024-1030, Tecpancaltzin was one day taking his *siesta* in the palace, when Papantzin, one of his great nobles, presented himself together with his daughter, the beautiful *Xochitl* ("flower"), bearing, with other gifts to the king, a kind of liqueur, made from the maguey juice by a process of which Papantzin was the inventor. The new drink pleased the royal palate, and the lovely form and face of the young maiden were still more pleasing to the royal taste. The king expressed his desire to have more of the new beverage at the hands of the fair Xochitl, adding that she might bring it unattended save by her nurse. Proud of the honour shown him, Papantzin a few days later sent Xochitl,

* Sahagun, lib. vi. cap. viii.

accompanied by a dueña, with some pulque. Xochitl was introduced alone to the presence of Tecpancaltzin. Bravely the maiden resisted the monarch's protestations of ardent love, but alone and unprotected she was unable to resist the threats and violence used against her. She was then sent to the strongly-guarded palace of Palpan near the capital ;" and there, cut off from all communication with parents or friends, she lived as the king's mistress. Her father meanwhile was told that his daughter had been entrusted by the king to the care of some matrons, who would perfect her education and fit her for a high position among the court ladies. Meanwhile the king visited Xochitl, and in 1051 a child was born, who received the name of *Meconetzin* ("child of the maguey"), and later that of *Topiltzin* (the "Justicer" *), by which he is known in history. But at last Papantzin, suspecting that all was not right with his daughter, visited the palace of Palpan in the disguise of a labourer; he found her and listened to the tale of her shame. His wrath knew no bounds, but he was quieted with the king's promise that the child should be proclaimed heir to the throne, and that, should the queen die, Xochitl would succeed her as his legitimate consort. It should be mentioned that polygamy and concubinage were strictly forbidden among the Toltecs of that period; that the laws were binding on king and peasant alike; and this explains why Tecpancaltzin was obliged to keep his love for Xochitl secret, until he was free to proclaim her publicly his queen; a step which was fraught with endless evils for his country, since after his death the Toltec princes, who were thus deprived of their hope of succession, broke out into open hostilities. The most powerful of these and nearest to

* Veytia, tome 1. chap. xxix.



INDIAN KING, DRAWN FROM CLAVIGERO, RAMIREZ MS., AND FATHER DURAN.

the throne was Huehuetzin;* with him were banded the caciques of the northern provinces beyond Jalisco and those bordering on the Atlantic Ocean, when after years of warfare, followed by calamitous inundations, tempests, droughts, famine, and pestilence (1097), the Toltecs, greatly reduced in numbers, dispersed; some directing their march south (the Toluca and Cuernavaca branch), others going north (the Tula and Teotihuacan branch) founded establishments at Tehuantepec, Guatemala, Goatzacoalco, Tabasco, and Campeche; whilst a few remained at Cholula and Chapultepec.† Ixtlilxochitl‡ places this event in 1008. Sixteen hundred are said to have settled at Colhuacan, intermarried with Chichemec caciques, and founded the family from which the kings of Texcoco were descended. Clavigero writes that the miserable remains of the nation found a remedy in flight (1031—1050), some settling in Yucatan and Guatemala, whilst others, with the two sons of Topiltzin, remained in the Tula valley, and that their grandsons were subsequently closely connected with the royal families of Mexico, Texcoco, and Colhuacan.§ Finally Torquemada|| writes “that they were counselled by the devil to abandon their country to escape utter annihilation, and that the account of their migrations is to be found in Acolhuan histories, written in peculiar characters as is the custom of these aborigines.”

The Toltec soldiers wore a quilted cotton tunic that fitted closely to the body and protected also the shoulders and thighs; their offensive weapons consisted of spears, light javelins, and clubs studded with steel, silver, or gold nails. They used a copper currency, which a short while ago was still found among the Tutupecans.¶

* Veytia, tome i. chap. xxxiii.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Ixtlilxochitl, “Relaciones,” Kingsborough, tome ix. pp. 332 and 333.

§ Clavigero, tome i. lib. ii. p. 54.

|| Torquemada, “Monarquía Indiana,” tome i. lib. i. cap. xvi.

¶ Ixtlilxochitl, *ut supra*.

These quotations, which might be multiplied, clearly prove that the Toltecs migrated south, following the coasts of both oceans; that they ceased to exist as a nation after the disruption of their empire; but that their scattered remnants carried on the work of civilisation in Central America, on the high plateaux, and in Anahuac; evidenced in the strong resemblance that the civilisations of these various regions bear to one another.

We will close this chapter with a few words about the Chichimecs, who occupied the valley after the Toltecs. Their emperor Xolotl made Tenayuca, to the west of Lake Texcoco, his capital, and despatched four chiefs, with a strong escort, to explore the country in every direction. They were absent four years, and in their report (1124) they stated that they had met with some Toltecs in the region formerly held by them; but that the greater proportion had founded important colonies in the far-off provinces of Tehuantepec, Guatemala, Tecocotlan, and Tabasco. Nopaltzin, the son of this emperor, sent likewise emissaries from Teotihuacan, whose report was to the effect that they had found a few Toltecs scattered in five different places, who told them of their hardships, adding that most of their fellow-citizens had gone farther west and south.

From these quotations it is clearly seen that the date of the oldest edifices in Tabasco cannot be anterior to the beginning of the twelfth century;* that Toltec influence was felt simultaneously on the high plateaux and in Central America, shown by the flourishing small Toltec state of Colhuacan, where King Architometl (1231) had revived those arts and sciences his ancestors had initiated, and which, since their extermination, had fallen into utter decay. This king succeeded so well in

* Veytia, tome II. chaps. ii., iii.

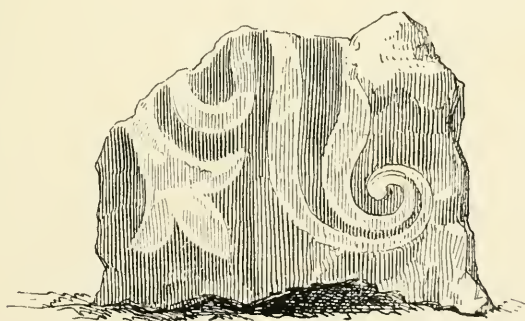
his enlightened policy that his country became an intelligent centre, which proved so beneficial to the barbarous Chichemecs.

Nopaltzin, following the example of Xolotl, compelled those of his subjects who still lived in caverns to build houses, live in communities, cultivate the land, and feed on prepared viands. He invited jewellers and lapidaries from Colhuacan to teach his people, instituting prizes for those who became proficient in mechanical arts, and also for those who made astrology, historical paintings, and the deciphering of ancient manuscripts their particular study.* And, lastly, in the closing words of Veytia's account, he says: "Among the documents I possess for the completion of my work are several bearing on the Mexicans. I found no difficulty in reading the paintings and maps; but although they are systematically classified as regards events posterior to their arrival in the valley, it is very different with their antiquities, their origin, and their wanderings; *their documents relating to this period being more rare and obscure than those of the Toltecs.*" †

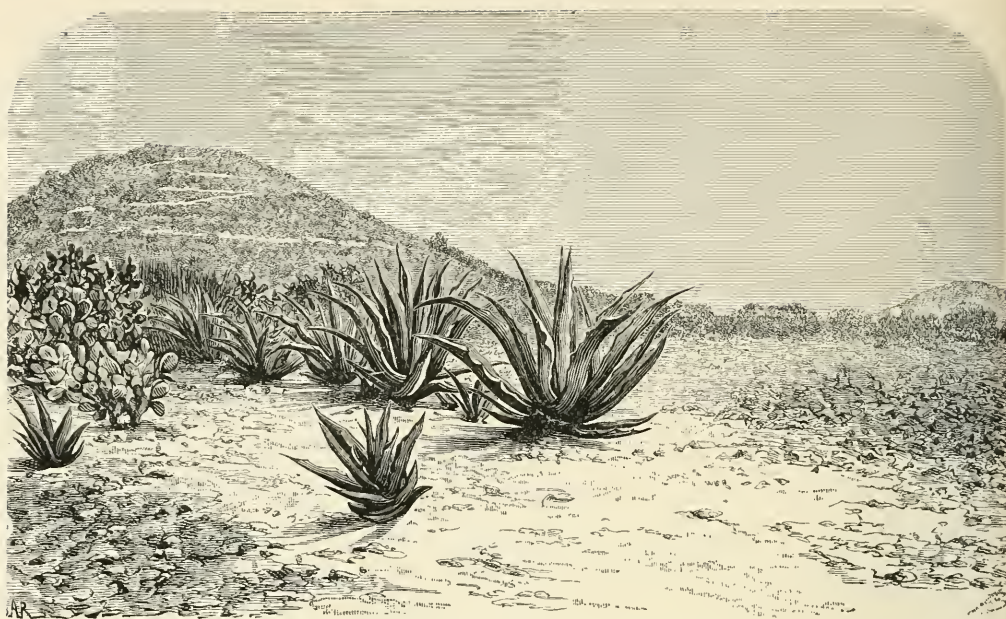
Having proved, and we think we have proved, the diffusion of Toltec arts and industries among the primitive populations of America, we will proceed to Teotihuacan.

* Mariano Veytia, tome II. chap. x.

† *Ibid.* chap. xii.



MURAL PAINTING OF TOLTEC HOUSE. (See p. 105, *Toltec House*.)



PYRAMIDS OF SUN AND MOON, TEOTIHUACAN.

CHAPTER VII.

TEOTIHUACAN.

Quotations—Pre-Toltec Civilisation—Egyptian and Teotihuacan Pyramids Compared—General Aspect of the Pyramids—Cement Coatings—*Tlateles* and Pyramids—Idols and Masks—Description by Torquemada—S. Martin's Village—Pulque and Mezcal—S. Juan of Teotihuacan.

ON account of its vicinity to Mexico, Teotihuacan has been so often described, that there is little or nothing to be said which has not been well said before. She was a flourishing city at the time of the Toltecs, and the rival of Tula; and like her was destroyed and subsequently rebuilt by the Chichemec emperor Xolotl, preserving under the new *régime* her former supremacy. In the opinion of Veytia, Torquemada, and other historians, Teotihuacan was a Toltec city; and my excavations in bringing to light palaces having nearly the same arrangement

as those at Tula, will confirm their opinion. The orientation of this city is indicated by Clavigero in the following passage :

“The famous edifices at Teotihuacan, three miles north of this village and twenty-five from Mexico, are still in existence.”

The two principal pyramids were dedicated to the Sun and Moon, and were taken as models for building later temples in this region. That of the Sun is the most considerable, measuring 680 feet at the base by 180 feet high. Like all great pyramids, they were divided into four storeys, three of which are still visible, but the intermediate gradations are almost effaced. A temple stood on the summit of the larger mound, having a colossal statue of the Sun, made of one single block of stone.

Its breast had a hollow, in which was placed a planet of fine gold. This statue was destroyed by Zumarraga, first Bishop of Mexico, and the gold seized by the insatiable Spaniards. The interior of the pyramid is composed of clay and volcanic pebbles, incrustated on the surface with the light porous stone, *tetzontli*; over this was a thick coating of white stucco, such as was used for dwellings. Where the pyramid is much defaced, its incline is from thirty-one to thirty-six degrees, and where the coatings of cement still adhere, forty-seven degrees. The ascent was arduous, especially with a burning sun beating down upon us; but when we reached the top, we were amply repaid by the glorious view which unfolded before our enraptured gaze. To the north the Pyramid of the Moon, and the great “Path of Death” (*Micoatl*), with its tombs and tumuli, covering a space of nine square miles; to the south and south-west the hills of Tlascala, the villages of S. Martin and S. Juan, the snowy top of Iztaccihuatl towering above the *Matlacinga* range; and in the west the Valley of Mexico with its lakes, whilst far, far

away the faint outline of the Cordilleras was perceptible in this clear atmosphere.

If by an effort of the imagination we were to try and reconstruct this dead city, restore her dwellings, her temples and pyramids, coated with pink and white outer coatings, surrounded by verdant gardens, intersected by beautiful roads paved with red cement, the whole bathed in a flood of sunshine, we should realise the vivid description given by Torquemada: "All the temples and palaces were perfectly built, whitewashed and polished outside; so that it gave one a real pleasure to view them from a little distance. All the streets and squares were beautifully paved, and they looked so daintily clean as to make you almost doubt their being the work of human hands, destined for human feet; nor am I drawing an imaginary picture, for besides what I have been told, I myself have seen ruins of temples, with noble trees and beautiful gardens full of fragrant flowers, which were grown for the service of the temples." This quotation goes far to prove that the ruins are not so ancient as some writers have maintained; but that temples and palaces were extant at the time of the Conquest, and that pyramids were repaired by the successive occupants of the soil, even during the wars which a displacement of races naturally entailed.

The outline of the pyramids is everywhere visible, and serves as a beacon to guide the traveller to the ruins of Teotihuacan, about thirty-seven miles north of Mexico. Besides these, there are some smaller mounds to the south, indicating that the ancient city extended as far as Matlacinga hill, which bounds the valley on this side, whilst it stretched six miles to the north.

We set out under the escort of an Indian, and soon reach an immense mound known as the *Citadel*, measuring over 1,950 feet at the sides. It is a quadrangular enclosure, consist-

ing of four embankments some 19 feet high and 260 feet thick, on which are ranged fifteen pyramids; whilst, towards the centre, a narrower embankment is occupied by a higher pyramid, which connects the north and south walls. The shape of the citadel bears a strong resemblance to a vast tennis-court, and if not the latter, it was in all probability used for public ceremonies, but never as a citadel. A little further we crossed a dry water-course, which becomes a torrent in the rainy season. The bed is full of obsidian pebbles, some transparent, some opaque green, but most of a grayish tint. On the opposite bank of the torrent we observed in some places three layers of cement, laid down in the same way, and consisting of the same materials, as I can certify, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary.

This cement is identical with that of Tula, except that there it was probably done for the sake of solidity, since it is only to be met with on the declivity of the hill; whereas here, where the city was demolished several times, it was due to the fact that the new occupant did not care to clear the ground of all the rubbish, but contented himself with smoothing down the old coating and laying a new one on the top of it. This supposition becomes almost a certainty when we add that numerous fragments of pottery have been found between the layers. This is, besides, amply exemplified in Rome and other cities, where ancient monuments are divided from later ones by thick layers of detritus; nor is it necessary for a long interval to have occurred between the two. On the other hand, if we suppose the soil between the coatings to have accumulated there by the work of time, an antiquity must be ascribed to these first constructions which would simply be ridiculous; and we think that if Mendoza had visited the ground, his conclusions would have been much modified. Traces of edifices and walls occupy

the base of the torrent, showing that the bed was narrower formerly than it is now, and that it was presumably embanked and spanned by several bridges. As we advance towards the Pyramid of the Sun, fragments of all kinds meet our eyes in every direction; the fields are strewn with pottery, masks, small figures, Lares, ex-votos, small idols, broken cups, stone axes, etc. I select for myself some masks which portray the various Indian types with marvellous truth, and at times not without some artistic skill. Among them are types which do not seem to belong to America: a negro (see plate), whose thick lips, flat nose, and woollen hair proclaim his African origin; below this a Chinese head, Caucasian and Japanese specimens; heads with retreating foreheads, like those displayed at Palenque, and not a few with Greek profiles. The lower jaw is straight or projecting, the faces smooth or bearded; in short, it is a wonderful medley, indicative of the numerous races who succeeded each other, and amalgamated on this continent, which, until lately, was supposed to be so new, and is in truth so old.

Some writers, on viewing the configuration of these massive mounds, have erroneously concluded that they were built for the same purpose as the Egyptian pyramids; but we cannot sufficiently impress on the reader that in America the pyramid was synonymous with temple, or used as basement for temples and palaces. People may have been buried in the former, as they were buried in the latter; but that is no evidence of any analogy subsisting between them. In Egypt the pyramid was a sepulchre and nothing more, which received additions each successive year, and assumed smaller or greater dimensions, according to the longevity of the sovereign who erected it. The gigantic pyramids of Cheops, Chephren, and Mycerinus, correspond to reigns of sixty years each; the smaller correspond to short reigns in which kings were not given time for con-

structing great monuments. Now, the American mounds belong to one epoch, were built on one plan without any intermission. Architecture, whether civil or religious, entirely differs in the two countries. In Egypt palaces were built of wood; in America they were built of stone. Among Egyptians temples



TERRA-COTTA MASKS AND HEADS FOUND AT TEOTIHUACAN.

were colossal; among Americans, on the contrary, they were small, primitive, hardly more than altars. The temple was all-important with the former, the palace with the latter. In fact, the two polities were diametrically opposed, save on such points of contact as are common to all races in the early stage of their civilisation.

Some writers, arguing from the existence of a civilisation anterior to the Incas, concluded, with some show of reason, that there existed a pre-Toltec civilisation also; but a moment's reflection will show that no parallel exists between the two; for the former, in a climate eminently favourable to the preservation of monuments, has hardly left any trace, whilst the latter, in a climate peculiarly destructive, has left whole cities and monuments in almost perfect preservation. In Peru, the people who followed the earlier races used extant remains for the foundations of their monuments, as, for instance, at Cuzco; whereas in Mexico and Central America monuments were repaired and restored on the same plan as that on which they had been erected. It follows that in Peru edifices are totally different in character from the foundations and cyclopean walls which support them, unless the ruins of Las Casas Grandes be considered pre-Toltec; but even so they would be the remains of edifices constructed by the first Nahua tribes in their progress towards the south.

Our digression has sharpened our appetites, and we hasten to the "fonda" by a short cut across imposing structures and the remains of houses built by the Spaniards who first settled here after the Conquest. Although they tried to build on the same principles as the Indians, they succeeded indifferently, for their constructions are but a ruinous mass, in the courtyards and open walls of which the poor Indians have established their cabins. These cabins measure barely six feet square; yet within them whole families lie huddled up together on the beaten ground, nearly suffocated in summer, almost frozen in winter, nursing their misery. A few beans, a tortilla, is all the food they have, and often not even that. Their children are numerous, but more than half die in the first years for want of proper care. The men earn one shilling a day—one

shilling to feed, clothe, and house eight or nine people. What wonder if they are in tatters which leave them half uncovered, exposed to the mercy of the elements? Outside these huts—for the inside does not own so much as a wooden peg—stands



ROAD TO S. MARTIN.

the *metate*, before which women are kneeling nearly the whole day grinding Indian corn for tortillas.

“Why don’t you put a roof over these standing walls? You would get, at very small cost, a comfortable dwelling for your families.”

“But, señor, we have no wood.”

“What, with all those trees about?”

"Ah, señor, we should have to pay for them, and where is the money to come from?"

"Why, then, club together, three or four families of you. These huge houses are quite spacious enough for the purpose."

They only shook their heads incredulously; so simple a notion was quite beyond them. As their fathers lived before them, so they do, and will continue to do so for a long time to come. We gave a few coppers to the poor wretches to drink our health in pulque, which is excellent here, the *maguey* reaching sometimes twenty feet in diameter, and the leaves nine feet ten inches in length. I am told that some plants yield as much as 600 litres of liquid. The way the juice is extracted from the aloe is this: Every five years, just as the *maguey* is about to bloom, shooting up a long stalk crowned with its umbelliferous flowers, the cone forming the centre of the plant is taken out, leaving a hole, which soon fills with the sap of the leaves around it. Then a man with a bottle and a large skin plies daily from plant to plant, taking up the liquid with the bottle and pouring it into the skin, which, when full, he empties into an open receptacle, made of a bull's hide stretched out on four poles. When the juice is sufficiently fermented, bitter herbs are added, and the pulque is then ready for sale.

Mezcal is a kind of brandy made from a smaller kind of aloe, not unlike a huge cabbage in shape. To prepare it, roots and leaves are left to soak until they are duly fermented; a calf's head or the best part of a chicken is added to the compound previous to distillation. In the first case it is called *mezcal cabecita*; in the second, considered the finest in flavour, *mezcal pechuga*. The best Indian cognacs are manufactured at Jalisco.



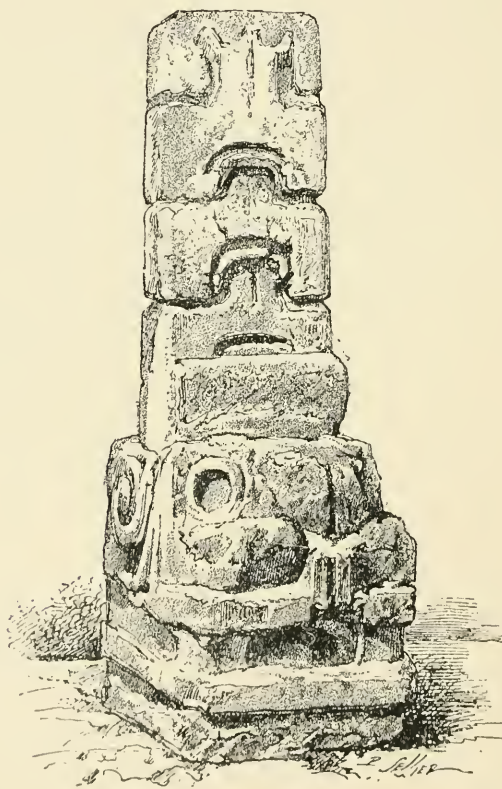
CHURCH OF S. JUAN, TEOTIHUACAN.

S. Martin, where we are going to put up for the night, is situated on the driest spot in the valley, so that the only green things to be seen about it are its enormous hedges of aloe, shooting up from fifteen to twenty feet high, and so thick as to make them quite impassable. Our next stage is S. John of Teotihuacan, which was formerly a station for the numerous relays of mules plying to and from Mexico, when more than two thousand passed daily. Then every village had "mesones" * and an immense "corrale," in which mules, horses, and donkeys were put up, whence the clapping of hands of the tortilleros was heard all day long, and copious libations to the Indian Bacchus were the reverse of edifying. But now all that is over. The railroad has turned S. Juan into a living tomb. The plaza is deserted, tiendas are silent, and windows only open when the tramping of some wretched donkey or a stray traveller disturb its solitude. Water, that first of commodities, is plentiful here, and great poplars, beautiful cedars, lend their cool shade, and make our walk to the church, which stands at the end of a noble avenue, quite enjoyable. This church is one of the finest to be seen in Mexico. The steeple, with its three orders of columns rising on three successive tiers, is striking for its elegance and fine proportions.

We alight here without much hope of being comfortable, for the only accommodation is a meson, with a courtyard giving access to bare rooms paved with bricks, devoid of any furniture, and where privacy is impossible, for anybody may come and lie alongside of you. Your ablutions have to be made at the well in presence of half the village congregated in the yard. When you are hungry you go to the "fonda" in the plaza, where the good man who keeps it does his best to cook you a nice

* Hostelrys.

dinner, which we eat to spare his feelings rather than because we like his menu. But if the *cuisine* left something to be desired, it was amply made up to us by the Municipality, and it was owing to their kindly help that we were able, within a few hours, to muster men in sufficient numbers to begin our operations.



MILE STONE, OR VOTIVE COLUMN, TEOTIHUACAN.



RUINS OF A PALACE, TEOTIHUACAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

TEOTIHUACAN (*continued*).

Ruins of a Teotihuacan Palace—Cemetery—Bull-Fighting—Pits and Quarries—Excavations—A Toltec Palace—Ants—Ancient Tombs—Sepulchral Stone.

AFTER a brief survey I discovered traces of cement, which made it evident that part of the village is built on the site of the ancient city; so I made up my mind to try my luck here before venturing into the very heart of the ruins, which I wished to take time to study. I began by opening four trenches in a small square used for bull-fighting, not far from Plaza Mayor. The first two yielded nothing particular, the next gave more satisfactory results; for here we came upon some dozen children's tombs, and five or six adults', if we are to judge from vases and other objects we found, for nothing could be made of the bones, which crumbled into dust. The few vases we unearthed are made of black clay, with hollow lines, not unlike those at Tula. They

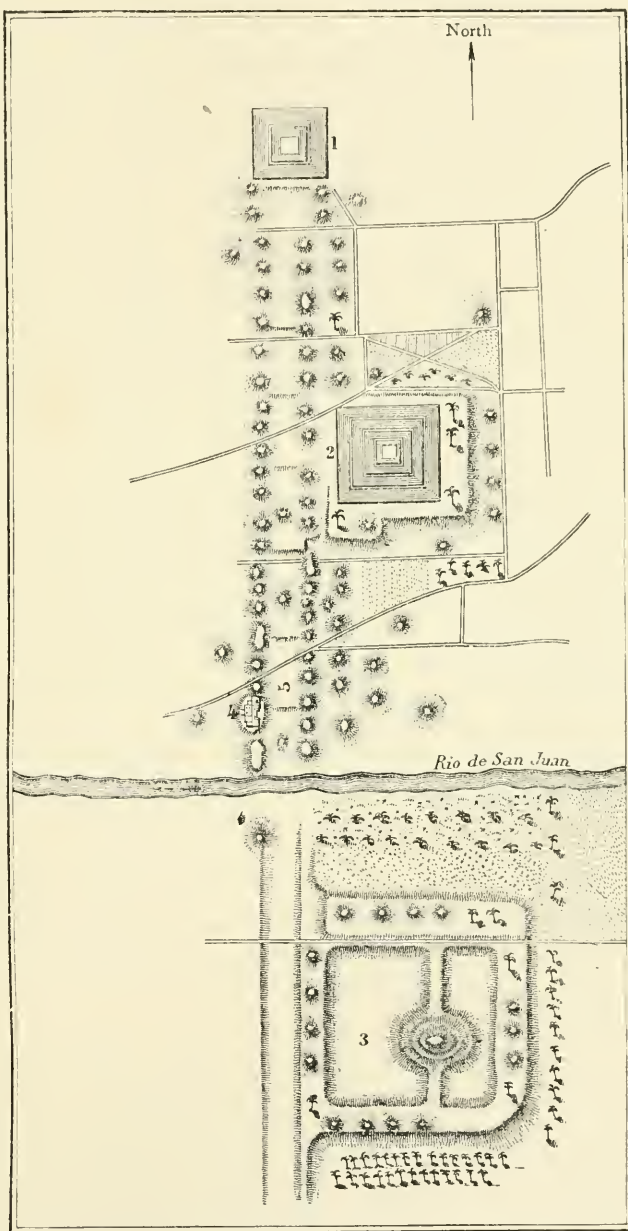
have flat bottoms from six to seven inches wide, with open brims, and from two to three inches high. Close to them were found traces of skeletons, which we know to have been those of poor people, for the bodies of the rich were burnt and their ashes placed in tombs. The vases were often found in couples; they are unfortunately so old, the ground is so hard as to form one mass with the vase, and so notwithstanding all our precautions, all our care in digging the ground and taking it up with daggers, they were broken to pieces, and I was only able to save a few. As to the bodies, they were so far gone, that it was impossible to ascertain their position; they were generally found from one foot three inches to one foot nine inches, and three feet three inches deep. The children were buried in a kind of circular vases, with upright brims; two of the skeletons were almost perfect, but the skulls, as thin as a sheet of paper, fell to pieces at my touch. On the same day I unearthed a goodly number of terra-cotta figures, a fine moulded mask, an axe, a few pots, one of which is ribbed and beautifully moulded, a number of small round pebbles, evidently marbles buried with the children; besides a large quantity of obsidian knives, by far the finest and lightest I have seen; round pieces of slate, presumably used as currency, *bezotes*, rings worn on the lower lip, arrow-heads, whilst numerous sheets of mica were found in every tomb.* Among human remains we also noticed those of the *techichi*, edible dog, parts of birds, and victuals, to sustain the dead on his long journey beyond the grave.

Leaving my men under my substitute, I went with Marcelino a little way beyond the village towards Pachucha, to visit the *cuevas* or pits of old quarries, which were subsequently used as catacombs; they are two miles and a half west of the Pyramid of the Moon. The first we visit has a circular aperture of considerable

* Sheets of mica were used by Red Indians to cover human bones when falling into dust.

size, with three narrow low galleries branching off in different directions at an angle of forty to forty-five degrees. The first explorers of these caves found human remains side by side with those of ruminants. The next cavern, of far greater dimensions, is three hundred and fifty feet further off. We enter one of the galleries, and walk for ten minutes before we can see the end; my guide assures me that this gallery extends as far as the Pyramid of the Sun, three miles beyond; that the whole country around is undermined by these cuevas, the soil of which is conglomerate.

We now come to large halls,



GROUND PLAN OF PRINCIPAL RUINS OF TEOTIHUACAN.

No. 1, Pyramid of the Moon. No. 2, Pyramid of the Sun. No. 3, Citadel. No. 4, Toltec Palace discovered at Teotihuacan. No. 5, Path of Death.

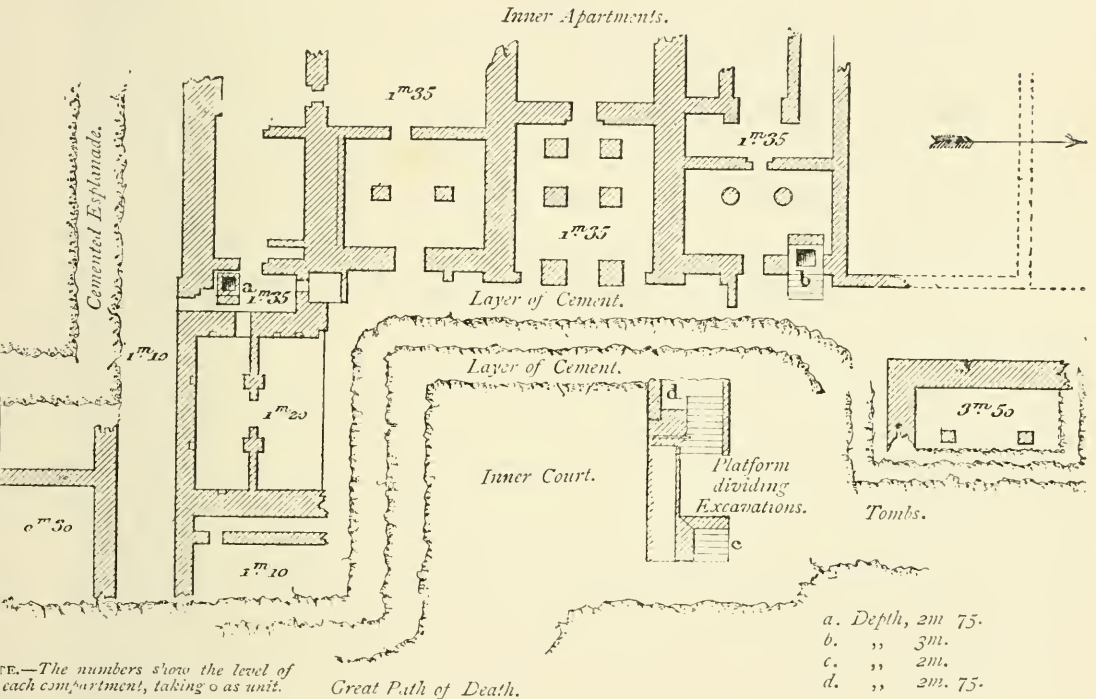
supported by incredibly small pillars ; the population round about use them as ball-rooms twice a year, and nothing can give an idea of the almost magic effect they then present. In this *cueva* the conglomerate is split up into gigantic isolated blocks of the most fantastic, weird shapes, in juxtaposition with a perpendicular calcareous formation. The next cavern we visit has a well and a rotunda in the centre ; ghastly stories are told of the brigands who formerly used this *cueva* as a burial-place for their victims after having plundered them ; wild suppositions which derive a colouring from the numerous human remains to be found everywhere, which are, however, undoubtedly the bones of the earlier Indians, as the thickness of the skulls sufficiently indicates.

From the *cuevas* we return to the ruins, where I look forward to bringing to light a house, that I may prove Teotihuacan to have been as much a Toltec city as Tula. Whilst casting about where to begin I noticed parts of walls, broken cement and terraces, north of the river, when forthwith we cleared away the rubbish until we reached the floor, following the walls, corners, and openings of the various apartments, as we had done at Tula ; and when three days later the engineer, Mr. P. Castro, joined us, ten rooms, forming part of the house, had been unearthed. He was so surprised at our success that, stopping short, he exclaimed : “ Why, it is our Tula palace over again ! ”

And so it was—inner court, apartments on different levels, everything as we had found before, save that here the rooms were much larger and most supported by pillars ; one of these chambers measures 49 feet on one side, that is 732 feet in circumference. The walls, nearly six feet seven inches thick, are built of stone and mortar, incrustated with deep cement, sloping up about three feet and terminating perpendicularly. The centre of

the room is occupied by six pillars, on which rose stone, brick, or wood columns bearing the roof.

This is undoubtedly a palace, and these are the reception rooms; the sleeping apartments were behind; unfortunately they lie under cultivated ground covered with Indian corn, so we are not permitted to disturb them. In the large room we observed small stone rings fixed to the wall, and on



GROUND PLAN OF TOLTEC PALACE AT TEOTIHUACAN.

each side of the entrance, also fixed to the wall, two small painted slabs. What had been their use? To support lights at night? But how was that possible? For even now the only lights the natives use are *ocotes*, pieces of resinous wood, whilst the slabs bear no traces of smoke. I had, it is true, met in the course of my excavations with terra-cotta objects which might have been taken for candlesticks, but to which I had attached no importance, when I suddenly recollected a passage in Sahagun

bearing on the subject: "The chandler who knows how to do his work first bleaches, cleans and melts the wax, and when in a liquid state he pours it on a wick and rolls it between two slabs; he sometimes puts a layer of black wax within a white layer," etc.* My first supposition had been right.

Here also the floors and walls are coated with mortar, stucco, or cement, save that in the dwellings of the rich, necessarily few, they are ornamented with figures, as principal subject, with a border like an Aubusson carpet. The colours are not all effaced, red, black, blue, yellow, and white, are still discernible; a few examples of these frescoes are to be seen in the Trocadéro. I am convinced that numerous treasures might be brought to light were regular excavations to be made, but the Mexican Government, which would have most interest in such a work, does not seem to care to undertake it.

Leaving my men under the direction of Colonel Castro, I return to the "Path of Death," composed of a great number of small mounds, *Tlateles*, the tombs of great men. They are arranged symmetrically in avenues terminating at the sides of the great pyramids, on a plain of some 620 feet to 975 feet in length; fronting them are cemented steps, which must have been used as seats by the spectators during funeral ceremonies or public festivities. On the left, amidst a mass of ruins, are broken pillars, said to have belonged to a temple; the huge capitals have some traces of sculpture. Next comes a quadrangular block, of which a cast is to be found in the main gallery of the Trocadéro.

In the course of my excavations I had found now and again numerous pieces of worked obsidian, precious stones, beads, etc., within the circuit of ants' nests, which these busy insects had

* Sahagun, "Hist. de las Cosas de España."

extracted from the ground in digging their galleries ; and now on the summit of the lesser pyramid I again came upon my friends, and among the things I picked out of their nests was a perfect earring of obsidian, very small and as thin as a sheet of paper. It is not so curious as it seems at first, for we are disturbing a ground formed by fifty generations.

Glass does not seem to have been known to the Indians, for although Tezcatlipoca was often figured with a pair of spectacles, they may only have been figurative ones like those of the manuscripts, terra-cotta, or bassi-rilievi, for there is nothing to show that they had any idea of optics.

I now went back to my men, when to my great delight I found they had unearthed two large slabs showing the entrance of two sepulchres ; they were the first I had yet found, and considering them very important, I immediately telegraphed to Messrs. Chavero and Berra, both of whom are particularly interested in American archæology. I expected to see them come by the very next train, to view not only the tombstones, but also the palace, which attracted a great number of visitors ; but to my surprise one sent word that he had a headache, whilst the other pleaded a less poetic ailment. *Ab uno disce omnes* ; most American writers speak of ancient monuments from hearsay—from foreign travellers who have visited them—they never having taken the trouble to travel any distance to see them.

One of the slabs closed a vault, and the other a cave with perpendicular walls ; we went down the former by a flight of steps in fairly good condition, yet it was a long and rather dangerous affair, for we were first obliged to demolish a wall facing us, in which we found a skull, before we could get to the room which contained the tombs. The vases within them are exactly like those we found in the plaza, except that one is filled with a fatty substance—like burnt flesh—mixed with some kind of stuff, the

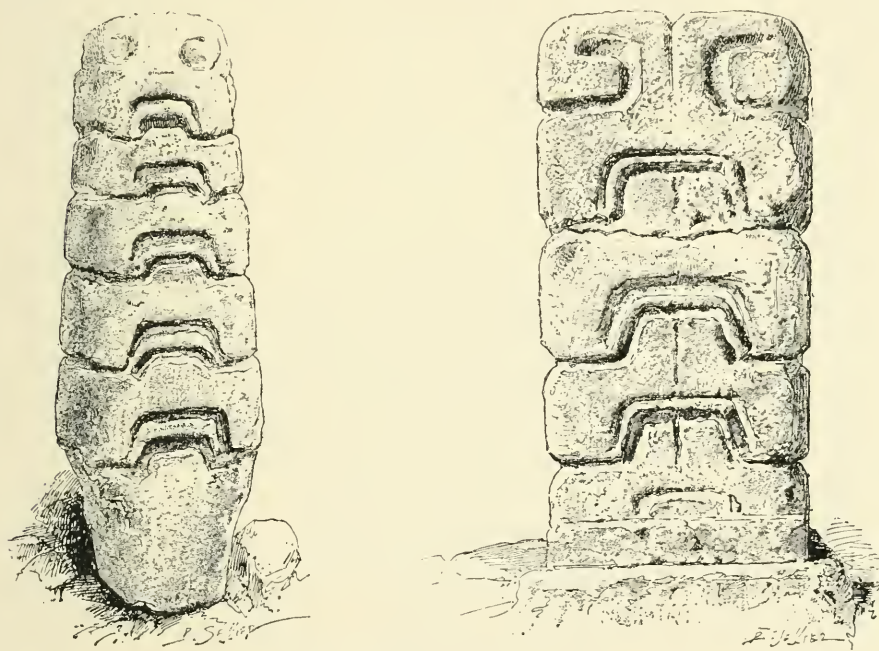
woof of which is still discernible, besides beads of serpentine, bones of dogs and squirrels, knives of obsidian twisted by the action of fire. We know from Sahagun that the dead were buried with their clothes and their dogs to guide and defend them in their long journey: "When the dead were ushered into the presence of the king of the nether world, *Mictlantecutli*, they offered him papers, bundles of sticks, pine-wood and perfumed reeds, together with loosely twisted threads of white and red cotton, a manta, a maxtli, tunics, and shirts. When a woman died her whole wardrobe was carefully put aside, and a portion burnt eighty days after; this operation was repeated on that day twelve months for four years, when everything that had belonged to the deceased was finally consumed. The dead then came out of the first circle to go successively through nine others encompassed by a large river. On its banks were a number of dogs which helped their owners to cross the river; whenever a ghost neared the bank, his dog immediately jumped into the river and swam by his side or carried him to the opposite bank."* It was on this account that Indians had always several small dogs about them.

The speech which was addressed to the dead when laid out previous to being buried is so remarkable as to make one suspect that the author unconsciously added something of his own: "Son, your earthly hardships and sufferings are over. We are but mortal, and it has pleased the Lord to call you to himself. We had the privilege of being intimately acquainted with you; but now you share the abode of the gods, whither we shall all follow, for such is the destiny of man. The place is large enough to receive every one; but although all are bound for the gloomy bourn, none ever return." Then followed the speech addressed to the nearest kinsman of the dead: "O

* Sahagun, Appendix to lib. III. cap. i.

son, cheer up; eat, drink, and let not your mind be cast down. Against the divine fiat who can contend? This is not of man's doing; it is the Lord's. Take comfort to bear up against the evils of daily life; for who is able to add a day, an hour, to his existence? Cheer up, therefore, as becomes a man."*

But to return to our tombstones. They are both alike, being about five feet high, three feet five inches broad, and six



VOTIVE STONES, TEOTIHUACAN.

inches and a half thick. The upper side is smooth, the lower has some carving in the shape of a cross, four big tears or drops of water, and a pointed tongue in the centre, which, starting from the bottom of the slab, runs up in a line parallel to the drops.

Knowing how general was the worship of Tlaloc among

* Sahagun, Appendix to lib. III. cap. i.

the Indians, I conjectured this had been a monument to the god of rain, to render him propitious to the dead; a view shared and enlarged upon by Dr. Hamy in a paper read before the Académie des Sciences in November, 1882; and that I should be in accord with the eminent specialist on American antiquities is a circumstance to make me proud. I may add that the carving of this slab is similar to that of the cross on the famous basso-rilievo at Palenque; so that the probability of the two monuments having been erected to the god of rain is much strengthened thereby.

As our slabs are far more archaic than those at Palenque, we think we are justified in calling them earlier in time—the parent samples of the later ones. Nor is our assumption unsupported, for we shall subsequently find that the cult of Tlaloc and Quetzalcoatl was carried by the Toltecs in their distant peregrinations. These slabs, therefore, and the pillars we found in the village, acquire a paramount importance in establishing the affiliation of Toltec settlements in Tabasco, Yucatan, and other places, furnishing us with further data in regard to certain monuments at Palenque, the steles of Tikal, and the massive monolith idols of Copan.

I next attacked the terraced court fronting the palace towards the Path of Death, and the amount of constructions and sub-structures we came upon is almost beyond belief: inclined stuccoed walls crossing each other in all directions, flights of steps leading to terraces within the pyramid, ornaments, pottery, and detritus; so much so that the pyramid might not improperly be called a necropolis, in which the living had their dwellings.

In a word, our campaign at Teotihuacan was as successful as our campaign at Tula. We were attended by the same good fortune, and the reader whom such things may interest will find a bas-relief of both Toltec palaces, and of one of the tombstones,

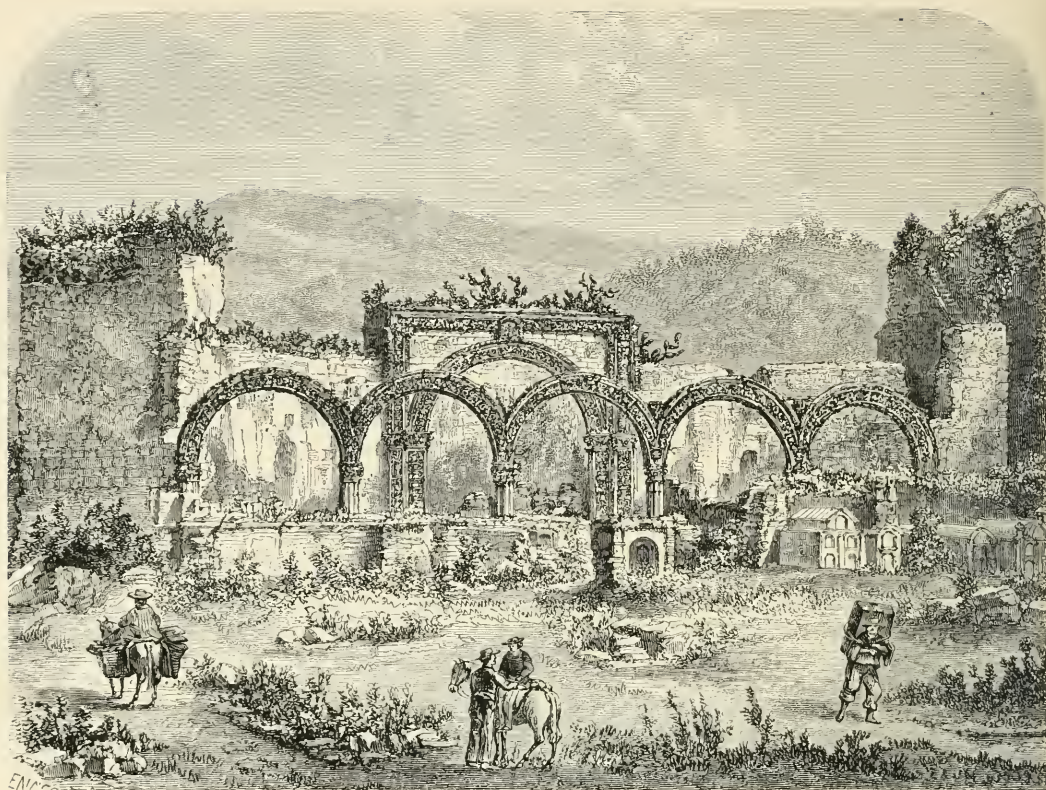
in the Trocadéro. The other I offered, as in duty bound, to the Mexican Government, which allowed it to remain in the village for eighteen months, when Mr. Cumplido, the editor of the *Nineteenth Century*, had it brought to Mexico, and sold it to the Museum for £10.

From what has been said it will be seen that the monuments at Teotihuacan were partly standing at the time of the Conquest.

Our next investigations will take us to the Sierra.



TOLTEC SEPULCHRAL STONE, TEOTIHUACAN.



RUINS OF TLALMANALCO.

CHAPTER IX.

MOUNTAIN EXPLORATION.

Travelling Companions—S. Lazarus Station—S. Anita—Ayotla—Tlalmanalco—
Tenango del Aire—Amecameca—A Badly Lighted Town—Rateros—Monte-
Sacro—Volcaneros.

ON my first visit to the country, three-and-twenty years before, I had gone to the Sierra for the purpose of making a collection of photographs of Popocatepetl and the hills surrounding it. As my men were getting my camera ready I amused myself in scratching the ground with my stick, when, to my great surprise, I discovered a bit of pottery and presently a whole vase; I next tried the

ground with my dagger and unearthed more vases, side by side with human remains. At that time, however, I was so absorbed by my photography, so ill prepared for gauging the importance of monuments and objects of antiquity regarding the country I was visiting, that I did not follow up my discovery ; but now, deeply conscious of their interest, I returned to Popocatepetl, in the hope of finding the place as I had left it, and to be able to bring to light its hidden treasures.

Before going any further I wish to make the reader acquainted with my travelling companions. First in rank and importance stands Don Perez Castro, a Colonel of the Artillery, appointed by the Mexican Government to watch and share my labours and discoveries. Colonel Castro has taken part in all the battles and combats of his country during the Franco-Austrian empire of Maximilian ; he is used to every climate, always ready to make the best of everything, blessed, moreover, with a perfect temper, a thorough good fellow, a caballero of the old school, with whom it is impossible not to get on. Next comes my private secretary, young Albert Lemaire, a promising topographer, a good draughtsman, who accepts cheerfully the hardships, privations, nay, the occasional perils of the expedition. Our servant, Julian Diaz, completes the list. He is a good specimen of a Calino, sweet-tempered, obliging, devoted, and indefatigable, and as simple and guileless as a child ; he is never seen without his faithful dog d'Artagnan, a fine-looking animal, far too lazy to be any good against thieves or in the pursuit of game.

S. Lazarus is the station of a new line connecting Mexico with Morelos and Amecameca ; here travellers must beware of the "cargadores," who swoop down on the luggage like birds of prey, and if they are not more than quick in protecting their traps they will, in all probability, never see them again. Poor Julian learnt it to his cost, for in spite of all our vigilance, our fighting, our

rushing madly after our porters not to lose sight of our things, when we reached the platform Julian's trunk was gone. I was indignant, but he took his mischance quite philosophically, as though it did not concern him, lighting his cigar and taking his seat without a word of reproach against his unscrupulous countrymen.

The guard gives the signal, the whistle is heard, and we steam out of this squalid station, following the road by which Cortez entered Mexico. In the time of the Aztecs it was planted with beautiful trees, a glowing vegetation and pleasant groves clad the borders of the lake, over which glided a thousand light skiffs and floating chinampas; but now the waters which penetrated the city everywhere have receded so far as to be hardly visible, and the bright towns and hamlets, once washed by them, have been removed miles inland, leaving a barren strip of land with incrustations of salt on the surface. It is refreshing to abandon this unhealthy, horrible swamp to skirt S. Anita's Canal, with its grassy banks, great trees, pretty villas, and blooming gardens overlooking the water. We perceive a few Indians among the reeds of the muddy waters casting their small nets to get a white fish to be found here. We pass Peñon with its sulphureous springs, stop at Santa Marta, once the culminating point of the road, and we shall soon leave behind the basin of the lake once so animated, so full of life, but now mournful and desolate beyond redemption.

The inhabitants, with amazing stupidity, even since my first visit, have laid low the forests of sombre pines and ilexes which shrouded the slopes of the volcanic hills occupying the valley, and imparting to it so unique a character; and now torrential rains carry away the soil no longer held by roots, leaving the rocks bare, so that nothing grows excepting the prickly pear or the funereal opuntiums.

It is not very difficult to see where this state of things will end. We can approximately calculate the time when the requirements of the railway will attack the rare forests as yet crowning the higher hills, and their summits be denuded also !

After Ayotla the landscape somewhat improves. We begin to see a few gardens, a few olive-trees, immense plantations of aloe, affording at once drink and raiment, yellow maize ready to be gathered before the impending rains. We are approaching the mountains and have passed Compañia and Lake Chalco on our right, and go through Rio Frio, once a favourite station for brigands.

On my first journey I fell a prey to them with a diligence full of people, when like a flock of sheep we all stood to be plundered by two wretched-looking fellows one could have brought down at one blow. At that time, however, it was deemed wise to offer no resistance, for fear of unseen companions lurking



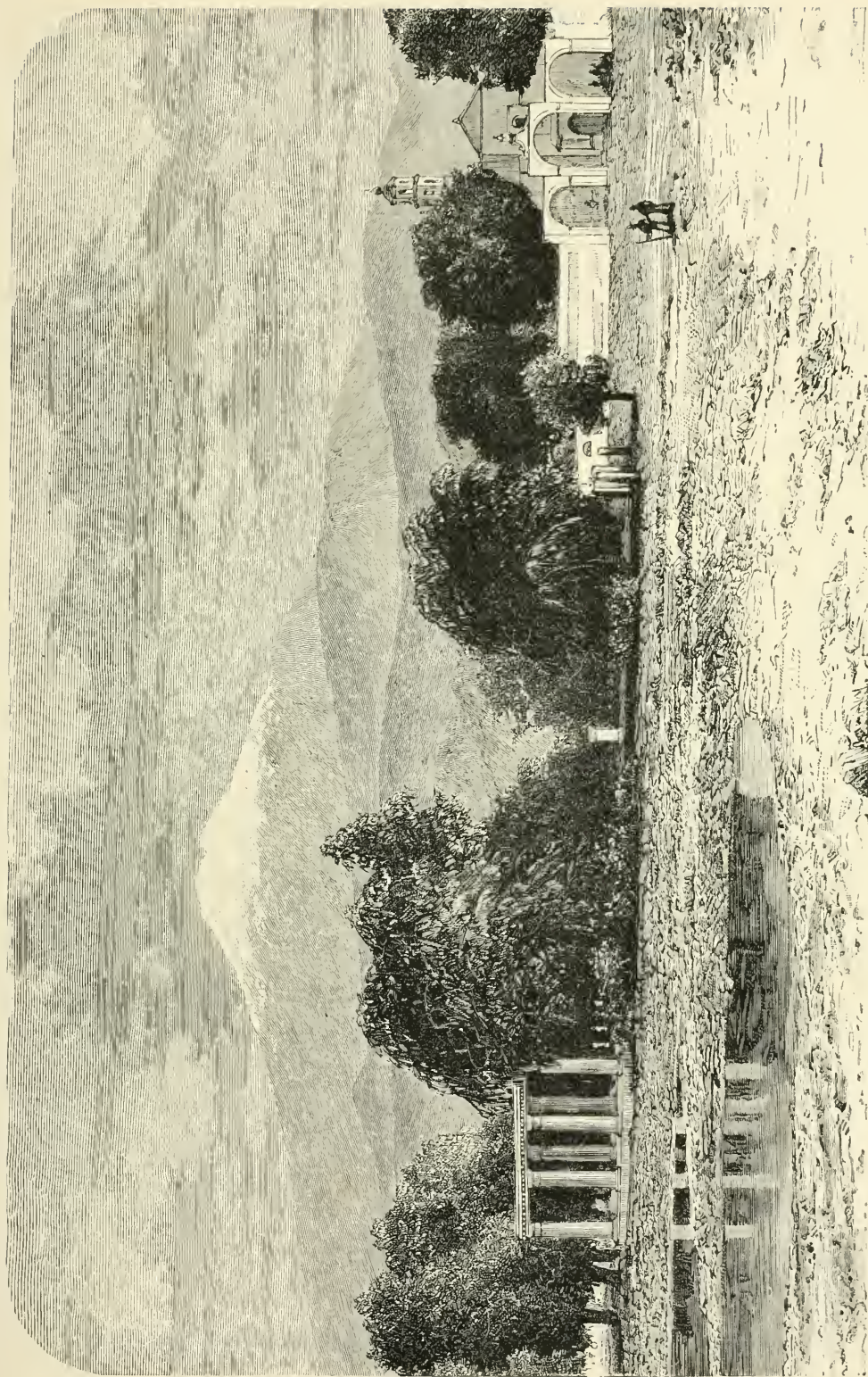
SANTA ANITA CANAL.

close by. Now Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, bearing to heaven their snowy peaks, become more and more distinct ; here is Tematla, and a few minutes more bring us to Tenango del Aire, "windy," where violent winds generally prevail. The line here leaves the old road which used to pass Tlalmanal, and for my part I regret it, as I miss seeing the remains of a convent built in the first years of the Conquest, which was never finished.

The ruins are composed of fragments of walls with a portico formed by five arches, supported by slender columns as finely sculptured as a Chinese ivory casket. Indian artists executed this beautiful carving after designs furnished by the Catholic Spaniards. I am told by the guard that when this line was open, hundreds of vases, statuettes, pottery of every shape and size were unearthed, none of which found their way to the Museum, the officials having shared the spoil among themselves. It is grievous to think that so many precious objects are lost to science, when it would be so easy for the Mexican Government to introduce a clause by which the contractors bound themselves to give up to the authorities any antiquities they happened to bring to light.

It was seven o'clock when we entered the station of Amecameca, having been four hours in performing a journey of some sixty-four miles. It was now pitch dark, so that our luggage was piled into the cart without our examining it, and it was not until we were in the house which was to take us in, there being no hotel in the place, that I perceived both locks of my portmanteau had been broken and £20 out of £60 taken. I naturally complained to the authorities, but as I could not say where the theft had taken place (though it must have been accomplished either at the station in Mexico or in the train) I obtained no redress, and I comforted myself with the thought that it would have been much worse had they taken the whole.

Amecameca is situated at an altitude of 626 feet above Mexico,

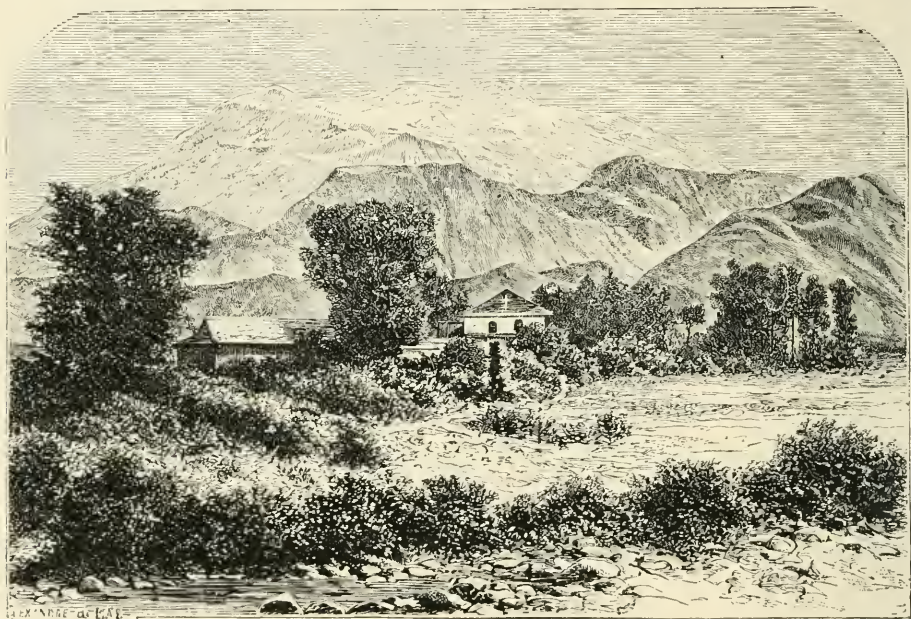


AMECAMECA.

at the foot of Monte-Sacro, planted with beautiful trees ; the air is cool even in summer and the climate good. This circumstance has made it a favourite resort for the rich Mexicans eager to escape from the excessive heat of the plain. But even in this favoured climate storms, rain, and winds prevail during several months of the year ; hence perpendicular roofs have replaced azoteas, giving it the aspect of an Alpine village. No more enchanting scenery can well be imagined : to the south-east, great Popocatepetl rises to the enormous height of 17,852 feet above the level of the sea ; fronting it to the east Iztaccihuatl, 15,208 feet, spreading its mantle of snow over its broad surface ; and if yielding in bulk and height to its gigantic neighbour it is far more picturesque, surrounded by a belt of hills, with a thousand fantastic forms, broken peaks, massive rocks, and deep ravines, presenting a variety and richness of colouring unsurpassed anywhere. In the morning the plain is covered with a slight white mist, like a bridal veil, through which show the tapering stalks of Indian corn and the gloomy masses of trees. In this light the lower hills are of a tender peacock-green, deepening to the darkest blue in the barrancas, whilst the crests are tinged with a faint blush ; but when storms, at this season very frequent, burst upon the gigantic and broken surface of these mountains, when clouds sweep across their slopes clashing against each other, and the lightning illumines the whole sky, when the thunder is re-echoed from all these peaks, from all these pinnacles, to die in the distant ravines, one understands how a primitive race peopled Popocatepetl with giants and evil spirits, whose agonies in their prison-house found expression in these convulsions of nature. But if at this season we have a succession of thunderstorms and torrential rains, if the sky is overcast at night and white exhalations rise from the plain, the mornings are bright and wonderfully calm.

The Municipality took measures some time since to have

Amecameca, which numbers 1,500 inhabitants, lighted with petroleum, their finances precluding gas; but, alas! they had counted without the *rateros*, who on the very first night spread over the city, put out simultaneously all the lamps and carried them off. But I hear some one ask, what is a *ratero*? A *ratero* is ubiquitous and essentially an American institution. His strength as a thief lies in being a member of a very "long firm." He is



HACIENDA OF TOMACOCO.

always to be found in crowds, whether in the market-place, church, or theatre; he penetrates ill-closed houses, whence he takes anything valuable; he strips railway carriages of their fixtures, and railways of their wooden rails—the largest beams are not safe from his grasp; horses and cattle are frequently driven from one district to be sold in another by the *ratero*. *Rateros* hardly ever miss a party crossing the Cordilleras, and they take care to be in sufficient numbers to ensure victory. It was a *ratero* who carried off Julian's box, and a *ratero* had eased me of £20.

The immediate attraction of Amecameca is Monte-Sacro, a volcanic hill, fire-rent, rising from the centre of the town to a height of 325 feet. There is a grotto which was turned into a hermitage at the time of the Conquest. The place soon acquired great celebrity for holiness on account of miracles which were performed thereat ; chapels, churches, and a good road with the twelve stations of the Cross, were erected by the piety and for the accommodation of devotees who came hither from all parts, and who, not satisfied with visiting the Monte-Sacro during their lifetime, often desired to be buried in the cemetery fronting the church, so that it is over-crowded.

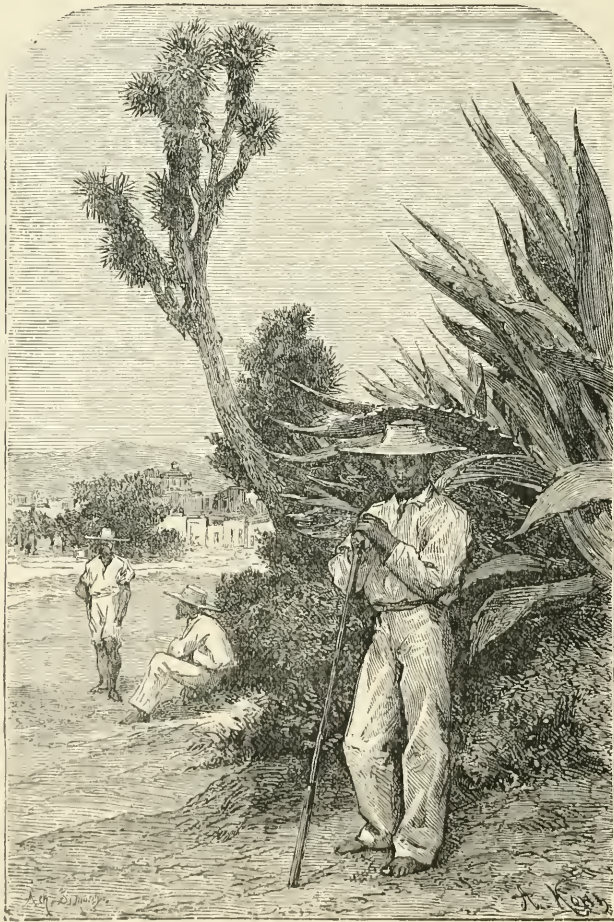
The tombs are covered with cement and perfectly flat, with rude drawings made by the friends of the dead, who scratch with their hands and bare feet certain figures whilst the plaster is soft ; but although I inquired of several people, I could obtain no satisfactory answer regarding the origin of this peculiar custom. The branches of the surrounding trees, as indeed those on the road up to the Cross, are hung with ex-votos of the oddest description : small crosses, bits of thread, coloured stuff, dead flowers, tangled hair, reminding one of offerings around Japanese temples. The view from the top of the hill is very fine and extensive, and the ascent has been made both easy and pleasant by a winding road planted with cypress trees to the north, and to the south side with ilexes of enormous size.

We were detained here by the weather, which was simply abominable, and also by the difficulty of procuring saddle-horses, mules to carry our baggage, and men inured by long experience to live and work in this rarefied atmosphere.

It was not without a feeling of deep satisfaction that we saw our last mule and our last man loaded ready to start. Our two best men are brothers, both of whom have been

employed in the sulphur-mines of Popocatepetl, one as foreman for the last eight-and-twenty years, and the other even longer. The five remaining Indians are also "volcaneros," accustomed to live at an altitude of 13,000 to 17,550 feet above the level of the sea.

At last every man is at his post, and we begin slowly the ascent of the mountain.



VOLCANEROS (MINERS)



BURIAL-GROUND, TENENEPANCO.

CHAPTER X.

TENENEPANCO AND NAHUALAC CEMETERIES.

The Rancho of Tlamacas—A Funeral Station—Great Excitement—Ascent—Search—Tenenepanco—Camping—Tlacualero—Excavations—Bodily Remains—Toys—A Beautiful Cup—A Well-preserved Skull—Mispayantla Grotto—Amecameca—A Tumulus Explored—Expedition to Iztaccihuatl—Nahualac—A Second Cemetery.

WITH a good horse and a comfortable saddle, the ascent of Popocatepetl is a delightful ride. The road rises so rapidly that the view, which was confined to the charming valley of Amecameca, becomes finer and more extensive at every turn of the road, embracing at last the entire plateau.

The air is crisp, the sun, though hot, is bearable, and when, after three hours' march, we reach the high mountain ridge, we pause to admire in silence the finest panorama in the world: the two great volcanoes to our right and left, the plain of Puebla on our rear, whilst before us stretches the marvellous plain of Mexico, every detail of which is distinctly visible in this clear atmosphere.

We are so lost in contemplation that the guide has at last to remind us that, unless we resume our march, we shall be late for luncheon, which awaits us at Tlamacas; but when we did reach it we found that the only accommodation to be had was a shed, open to rain, wind, and cold. There was fortunately a table and a chimney, and with our camp-beds we managed pretty well.

As soon as we had seen to our luggage we sallied forth in search of the cemetery under the escort of the chief guide, and began the ascent of Monte del Fraile, 782 feet high, over a distance of three miles. This may appear a small matter—but a short walk; yet a climb performed at an altitude of 13,000 feet on moving sand, every step of which is painful, is no joke: the head aches, the pulse throbs, every breath drawn is a gasp, the throat is dry, every attempt to stoop makes one dizzy, rest becomes necessary every few minutes; and on reaching the crest of Tenenepanco rock we were thoroughly exhausted.

My impatience to find the cemetery was so great, that I could not stop long to contemplate the fine view to be seen here; we immediately began our search. But though I seemed to recognise the plateau, it looked somewhat different—strewn with flat stones I had not observed before—consequently I climbed higher, followed by an old Indian who had been with me in my first expedition, and who opened the ground in several



POTOCATEPETL AND PICO DEL FRAILE.

places. It was found very hard, compact, gravelly, without any appearance of ever having been disturbed; so after many fruitless attempts, I returned to the first place, when the old Indian, who had not breathed a word hitherto, said:

"Señor, this is the place where you found some vases the last time you were here."

"But how do these flags come here?"

"Oh, from subsequent excavations."

"Then I am sold, robbed, done out of my find," I cried in my disappointment, as though the cemetery were my property.

"But," objected the old volcanero softly, "only a few loads of detritus were taken away; there must be more to come out."

Acting on advice which seemed so reasonable, I soon discovered numerous *tepalcates*, fragments of vases, cups, and various potteries; we had lost so much time, however, in looking about, that we were soon obliged to abandon the mountain, trusting in what the morrow would bring forth.

A few words about our encampment may not be out of place here. The men occupied an open shed, with a huge chimney in the centre, where twice a day they prepared their own food, consisting of a small quantity of meat and the indispensable tortilla, the whole washed down with a good drop of mezcal. They slept on trusses of dry grass and mats. We were not better housed than the men, whilst our cooking was a great deal worse; if our shed was not quite so open, it was sufficiently so to admit the bitter night cold; the wind came in at all the windows unprotected by any shutters, through the thousand cracks of the ill-jointed enclosure, searing our faces and causing incessant sneezing. Although whole trees were burnt in the huge chimney, it made no appreciable difference in the atmosphere of the room, and as there was no tunnel we were nearly suffocated by the smoke, which, hovering about us, only

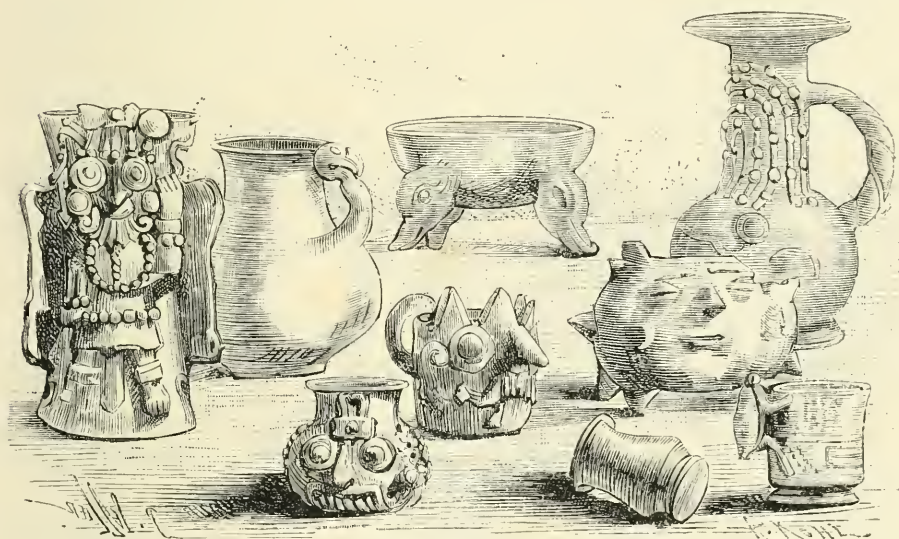
escaped through the roof. At this altitude, with six or seven degrees below zero (Centigrade) at night, our bed of gutta-percha felt like icicles, and every time I came in direct contact with it, I instantly awoke.

The food was plentiful, for the Tlacualero, our "errand-man," went twice a day to Amecameca to fetch what was required for the whole party; and although the distance was fifteen leagues over a mountain path, I never knew him late. But if provisions were abundant, Julian's cooking was so extraordinarily bad, that the only one who seemed to enjoy and thrive on it was the dog d'Artagnan; to him it was a matter of indifference if cutlets and beefsteaks were burnt to a cinder, if beans were transformed into sticks—nothing came amiss. As for us, not wishing to starve, we were obliged at last to do the cooking ourselves and confine our Calino to "washing up." Not that he was a bad fellow, far from it; he deserved in every respect the excellent character I had received with him for honesty, but a man may have given satisfaction as a sacristan, as no doubt he had, and yet be a sorry cook.

The chill nights were certainly trying, but they were made up to us by the glorious mornings; we rose with the first light of day; the sun, still invisible to us, was already greeting the summit of the great volcano, from which rose a light vapour. We watched the snow changing from a delicate pink to dazzling white; the crest of El Fraile, as yet wrapped in nocturnal mists, showed gray against a transparent blue sky, whilst its base, shrouded by a deep fringe of funeral pines, gradually emerged from their gloom at the sun's magic touch. To the east the plain of Puebla, and far away on the horizon the imposing cone of Orizaba, whilst in the middle distance the severe outline of Malinche seemed to divide the sky. The city de los Angeles, with her square massive buildings, her steeples, cupolas, the towers of the cathedral, the

stately pyramid of Cholula rose at our feet bathed in a flood of morning light.

The old Indian proved a true prophet ; my predecessors had not removed everything ; trenches branching off in every direction so as to embrace the whole plateau were at once made and brought to light wholly undisturbed tombs. The first was that of a woman whose head I was able to preserve intact : the bones of all the rest were unfortunately reduced to a gelatinous paste. The dead



VASES FOUND AT TENENEPANCO.

were buried at a depth varying from some two feet to four feet eight inches ; the bodies doubled up, both chin and arms resting on their knees ; hands and feet were gone. Within the tomb, over the head, was a *sebile*, or hollow terra-cotta plate, two small black earthen horns, besides several vases. The whole was damp and moist, the vases filled with earth and water, and the utmost care was required in taking up such fragile objects. They soon, however, hardened by exposure, when they could be easily and safely cleaned and packed. As far as could be judged from the bones and pottery, one of the tombs contained the bodies of a man

and a woman. Another, probably that of a chief, had no human remains left, but I found a great variety of precious objects, made of *chalchihuitl*, a hard green stone, which takes a fine polish, a kind of jade or serpentine, much valued by the Indians; besides these were numerous arrows of obsidian, beads for necklaces, some of hard stone, some of terra-cotta, and a few small figures. A singular circumstance marked this tomb; not a single bead, not a single ornament but was broken, presumably at the time of the burial, as a token of grief. It is at least the only plausible solution which can be given for so many hard and resisting objects having been systematically destroyed.

Moreover, by far the largest proportion of these granite or porphyry beads, whether owing to their great antiquity or their having lain in a very destructive soil, crumbled away at our touch. Broadly speaking, the tombs which had not been disturbed were two to one; the dead had been buried without any regard to their position.

We are not yet inured to our life at an altitude of 13,000 feet, and our daily ascensions are painful in the extreme; our faces literally peel in this sharp wind and hot sun, whilst our hands are frightfully chapped and almost paralysed. It would be difficult to bear up long against our hardships were it not for the stupendous result of our excavations: kitchen utensils, every variety of vases representing the Toltec god Tlaloc, fruit cups, jewel cups, with feet shaped like a duck's bill or a boar's head; chocolate cups with porpoise-like handles; beads, jewels, a whole civilisation emerges from these tombs, and carries us back to the life of this long-forgotten people. Here we have caricatures of ancient warriors; further on a water-carrier bearing his jars like the modern "aguadores;" next are toys and tiny terra-cotta chariots, some are broken, some still preserve their four wheels; they were, presumably, a fond mother's memento who, ages

gone by, buried them with her beloved child. These chariots are shaped like a flattened *cayote* (a kind of long-bodied fox) with its straight ears and pointed face, and the wheels fit into four terra-cotta stumps; on my renewing the wood axle-tree, which had been destroyed long since, the chariots began to move.

Many more objects were brought to light from these tombs—richly ornamented “fusaiöles,” marbles, necklaces, baby-tables, which, like the toy chariots, represented some quadruped—resembling Greek toys. This coincidence between people so different and so far removed from each other is not surprising, for elementary ideas generally find a common expression. It should also be observed that these toys, however



CARICATURE OF TECUHTLI-KNIGHT (KNIGHT OF THE EAGLE).

rude, do not necessarily mark a very ancient epoch. Early manifestations live on through ages and are found side by side with the highest civilisations, and are still to be met among the people long after the well-to-do possess objects of art.

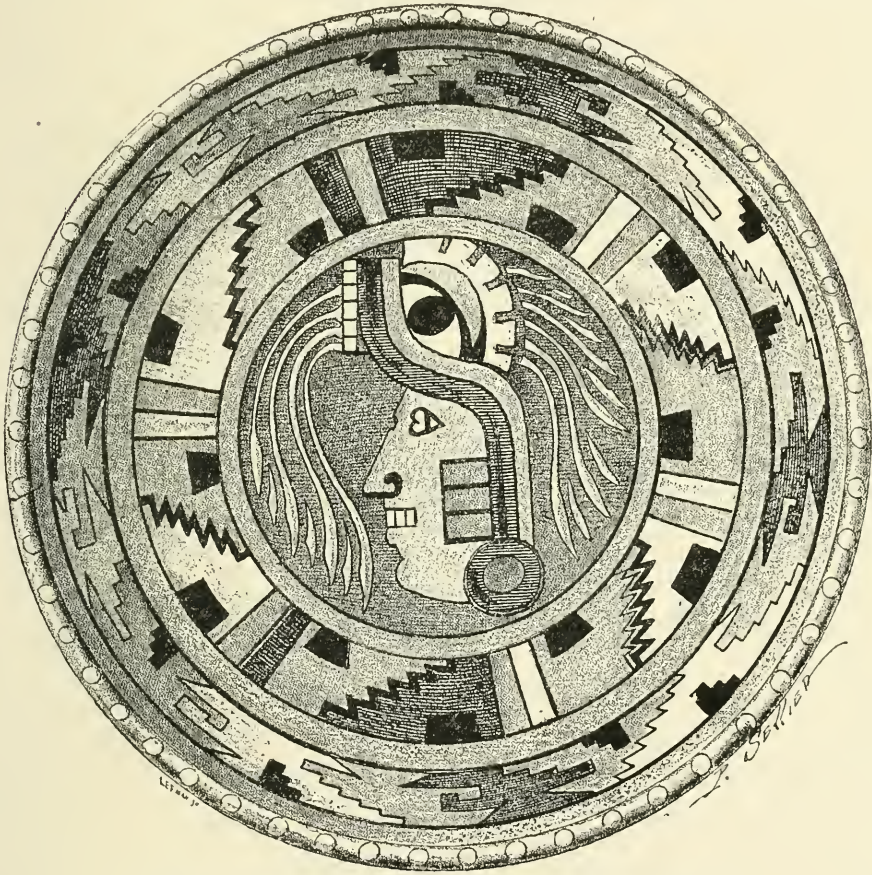
The 9th of July was one of our best days. Out of ten tombs five were found intact and yielded sixty remarkable pieces, one of which is unique and of peculiar interest. It is a three-footed terra-cotta cup some six inches by three by one and a half at the

bottom inside ; wonderful to relate, it emerged without a blot from its gloomy abode. Both the inside and outside are covered with pretty devices painted white, yellow, blue, green, and red, fused into a harmonious whole. The colours are in relief and like enamels. Next, one almost as beautiful but smaller, and covered with dirt, was found. These two lovely cups were put out to dry in the sun, when, to my horror, I saw that one was fast scaling off, whilst the brilliant colours of the other were fading visibly. To remove them into the shade was the work of an instant, but, alas ! it did not arrest the work of destruction, which continued at an alarming pace. A photograph of the finest cup, as well as the colours of the paintings, was immediately obtained, but it only gives a faint idea of the beauty of this charming work of art.

From these tombs were likewise unearthed a number of diminutive brass bells, which were used both as ornaments and currency ; besides large fat vases with a hand painted red over a black ground. This was a Toltec memento, either symbolic of Hueman or of Quetzalcoatl, so often seen on the walls of Yucatec palaces, and likewise on the monuments of some North American tribes. But our most curious "find" was a perfectly well-preserved human brain, the skull of which was gone. This cerebral mass had been protected from the pressure of its surroundings by a stout cup into which it was wedged. No doubt was possible : the two lobes, the circumvolution of the brain to the minute red lines of the blood-vessels, all was there.

The fact that a human brain could have been found in good preservation when the skull had disappeared, was received with Homeric laughter ; all I can say is that it is so, that the finding of it was witnessed by my associates ; that in every tomb where the skull should have been, was invariably observed a whitish substance, which at first was mistaken for lime, but which subsequently whenever it was met with, the men instantly cried out : "*Aqui*

está uno—here is one" (body), and near it vases and fragments clearly indicating the presence of a tomb. These brains, however, not having been protected like the first, were all flattened into a white cake of some five inches by two in thickness. The only explanation I can offer is that at an elevation of 13,000 feet, close



BOTTOM OF ENAMELLED CUP FOUND IN THE BURIAL-GROUND.

to the volcanic cone of Popocatepetl, in a soil saturated with sulphureous vapours (a film of sulphide always extended over my nitrate of silver washes), the same chemical combinations which destroyed the bones, may have acted as a preservative on cerebral matter. But it will be asked, why not have borne away that wonderful brain? I ought to have done so, no

doubt, but without alcohol the thing was impossible; besides, had I done so, should I have a better chance of convincing people at a distance?

The toy chariots found no better favour with the public. Our illustrations, however, will settle once for all this vexed question. As must appear to the most inexperienced eye, the character of these toys is exceedingly archaic, nor am I aware that any museum or private collection has anything to show at all approaching them. This was conceded, but it was denied that they were chariots at all—the wheels were only “malacates,” *i.e.* “fusaïoles”! Numerous spindles were indeed found by us in the cemetery. Profuse collections may be seen and compared in every museum, when the most ignorant must see that these wheels are quite different to “fusaïoles” or whorls. It will be said that this toy was but the copy of a chariot brought in by the Spaniards; but a glance at the drawing will show how absurd is the assumption, and carry conviction to the most incredulous.

Granted that is so, what inference do you draw from it? That the Mexicans had chariots? Hardly, since all authorities are silent on the subject, and when we know that the only means of transportation was afforded by carriers. But if such chariots were not available in distant expeditions across rivers, over mountain paths, through immense forests, it was not so within the radius of a city having good roads; and what is there against the possibility of a hand-cart corresponding with ours having been in use?

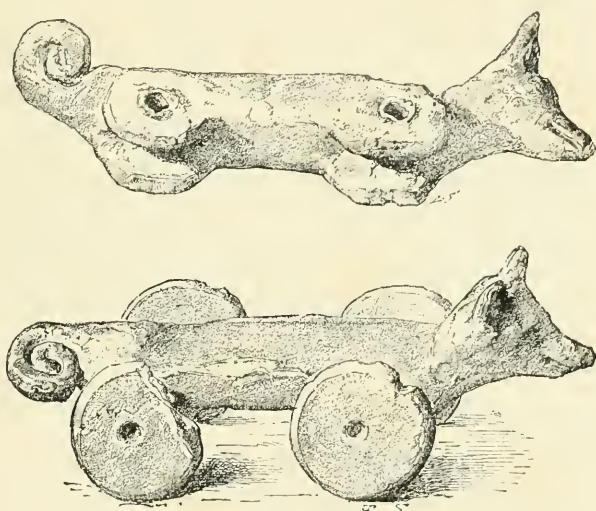
I am far from affirming that it was so, although certain expressions and quotations might be adduced which would show the supposition to be not so far-fetched as it looks on the face of it. We read in the Ramirez manuscript, for instance, that Montezuma II. set out for his Huaxateca expedition with a

numerous army and *carruages*.* Why should the Indian writer have used an ambiguous word meaning both *chariot* and *transport*, when the former must already have been extant when he wrote—that is, after the Conquest? Farther, Padre Duran relates how this same Montezuma, wishing to erect a temalacatl, had a huge block quarried at Aculco, near Amecameca; and Plate XXV. shows this block raised by means of a rude chariot having clog-wheels, drawn by a multitude of Indians.† The text,

it is true, does not specify a chariot; but if they were unknown, how do they come in his drawing? It is unaccountable, too, that no mention is made of the stone having been brought on rollers or wheels, seeing that it could not have come so

great a distance by any other means. It is altogether a mystery.

Lastly, Juarros, in describing the battle at Pinar, fought against Alvarado, mentions war-engines, or what would now be called ammunition carts, moving on *rodadillos*, which were drawn by armed men wherever they were required. These carts were loaded with arrows, spears, shields, stones, slings, etc., and men, chosen for the service, distributed them as they



CARTS, CHILDREN'S TOYS.

* Ramirez Manuscript, "Hist. Mexicana," p. 75.

† Father Duran, "Hist. de las Indias," tome II. Plate xxv.

were wanted.* Does "rodadillo" mean here a clog-wheel or a roller? If these carts carried arms to combatants in different parts of the field of battle, does it not follow that they moved on wheels, since rollers would have made the diminutive "forts" immovable, contrary to the end proposed?

Should, however, both quotations and arguments seem valueless, it might be added that the toy chariots were perhaps of primeval Toltec invention, the use of which had been lost after their expulsion from the plateaux.

But to return to the cemetery. Whether it be considered Toltec or otherwise, whether ancient or comparatively modern, we hold to its antiquity, to its being essentially Nahua, dedicated to Tlaloc, the god of rain and plenty, the fertiliser of the earth, the Lord of Paradise, the protector of green harvests. We are in his dominions, for he was believed to reside where the clouds gather, on the highest mountain-tops.

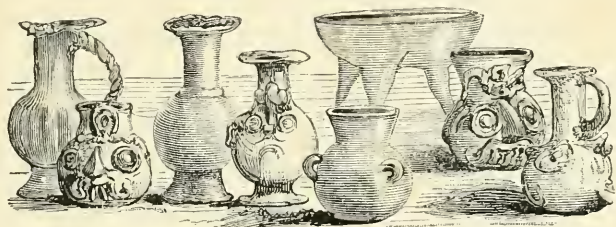
The first plate shows the vases unearthed at Tenenepanco, five of which portray this god, with his prominent eyes, the drops of water streaming down his face, making up his teeth, his beard or moustachios; he holds in his right hand a writhing serpent, thereby representing the flash and the thunderbolt—his voice as heard in storms. In the Nahualac Plate four vases also figure the same god.

The nations who succeeded the Toltecs on the plateaux adopted this eminently Toltec deity, who was one of the most popular gods down to the Conquest. The later tribes, however, discarding the mild practices of the Toltecs, stained his cult with human sacrifices. We will add a few quotations showing how great was the analogy between the places consecrated to Tlaloc and the Tenenepanco cemetery.

* Juarros, "Hist. de Guatemala," tome II. p. 249, 1809.

Torquemada calls him the god of paradise and great delights ; that his statue on the highest mountain of Texcoco represented a man seated on a square slab, having at the back a huge stone jar, into which *ulli*, maize, beans, and other vegetables were placed by the devotees, and that this offering was renewed every year. Ixtlilxochitl mentions, *inter alia*, that five or six young children were yearly sacrificed to this deity, their hearts torn out, and their bodies buried ; and we read in Father Duran that Montezuma and the allied princes repaired on the hill on which a child seven or eight years old was sacrificed. This festival was celebrated in the

month of April, when the maize was above the ground. The next quotation from Torquemada is by far the most in-



VASES OF BURIAL-GROUND UNEARTHED AT NAHUALAC.

teresting, for it mentions Popocatepetl and the surrounding hills where we are carrying on our explorations :

“Indians entertained a great respect for this mountain, whose climate was mild, and the abundance of whose waters made the land around unusually fertile, and here children and slaves were slain in honour of Tlaloc. To the south is another mighty hill, Teocuinani, ‘the Divine Singer,’ so called by the natives because whenever the clouds shroud its summit the volcano bursts forth in flashes of lightning and claps of thunder, spreading terror among the whole population, who hasten to the hill to offer men, incense, paper-crowns, feathers, *plates, urns, goblets, cups, toys, and vases*” (exactly what we have found). “Close by was a well-constructed house, *Ayauchcalli*, ‘house of rest,’ in which stood an idol of green stone, *chalchihuitl*, about the size of a child

eight years old. On the arrival of the Spaniards this idol was carried away and buried *in the mountains* by the Indians, together with numerous objects of gold, silver, and precious stones.”*

We have often seen clouds collected around the top of Teocuinani (El Fraile), and many a time have we heard the dread voice of the Divine Singer; if our Tenenepanco cemetery is not the one spoken of by Father Duran, it is assuredly its nearest neighbour, and we are convinced that this site was once sacred to Tlaloc, consequently ancient, and that besides the victims sacrificed, both men and women were buried here as in consecrated ground, with their utensils, arms, and ornaments.

The foregoing quotations prove, moreover, that the surrounding mountains contain several funeral stations, which might be profitably explored; Mount Tlaloc alone would enrich the most greedy. As for us, we are satisfied with having discovered two and opened the way to others; and when we add that our excavations yielded three hundred and seventy pieces, our self-satisfaction will not appear out of place. The greatest care was taken in packing our treasure in four large *huacales*, “cases,” and the freight reached safely Amecameca and Mexico, where the Government confiscated it.

In our two years’ explorations the Mexican Museum had deducted a third from the best of our finds; now they illegally detained the whole, refusing to give up any part of it. Let future explorers do their work quietly, offering nothing to the Republic, which might adopt, as in our case, a singular mode of testifying its gratitude.

The next day after our return to the village, we set out for the Mispayantla grottoes, accompanied by a guide and three Indians

* Torquemada, tome II. lib. vi. cap. xxiii.

provided with tools. These grottoes are situated in the barranca known as Mispayantla, at once the most picturesque and the most important in the Mexican Valley, extending from El Fraile to the east and west as far as the Amecan Valley. From rocks rising perpendicularly to some six hundred and nine hundred feet, the eye travels down into its depths, where the course of the river is lost in a glowing wilderness of vegetation. The road was so bad and unsafe that we got off our horses and walked up to the grottoes, where a great disappointment awaited us, for they are nothing but pent-houses, produced by the projecting rock ; holes and notches, moreover, plainly testified that we had been preceded long since by other seekers. Broken skulls and bones, of no interest whatever, lay scattered about. We picked up, however, saucepan handles of every size, red earthen vases striped with black, a much injured idol of Tlaloc, a bit of an Indian flute. This had been, no doubt, a funeral station completely rifled. We came away with feelings the reverse of pleasant.

We were not more successful in attempting a *teocalli* in the heart of Amecameca, than we had been at Mispayantla ; remembering, however, that cemeteries abounded in the mountains, I flattered myself I should find one towards Iztaccihuatl. "Tepalcates," potteries, I had been told, were to be met in various places, but small had been the result on my visiting the sites indicated. From inquiries and the promise of a good reward, I got an Indian to act as guide to Iztaccihuatl, which he knows well, having often been there for the same purpose as ourselves ; a few preliminaries are soon settled, and taking some half-dozen men with me, we set out on our mountain expedition. The ascent is performed with great difficulty, for we are just in for the rainy season, and the path is simply abominable. Our horses slip, rear, fall, and we frequently risk breaking our necks ; the mule, laden

with our instruments and luggage, refuses to move until he is relieved of half his burden.

Leaving Amecameca, we follow a very steep path overlooking frightful precipices, and reach the summit after a forced march of six hours. From this point may be seen the valley, some 3,900 feet long by 1,625 to 1,950 feet broad, bounded by the mountain range which to the west of Mexico makes it impassable. To the east are the peaks of Iztaccihuatl, covered with virgin snow, 650 feet below us; on the crest the barometer marks 12,512 feet, and 12,318 in the valley, that is as near as possible the altitude of Tlamacas.

This narrow valley is so completely closed in by perpendicular rocks, that it would be next to impossible to spy it out without a guide; it is fringed half-way up by gloomy pines, but above us the rock is quite bare. Stray cattle graze peaceably at the bottom of the valley, which owes its name to the nearest peak, "Nahualac." The latter must have been a far more important funeral station than Tenenepanco. Everything favours this assumption, whilst stone foundations make it probable that a temple or a sanctuary dedicated to Tlaloc once stood here, similar to that mentioned by Father Duran, of which no trace has been found by us. We descry, however, to the north-east of the valley, an artificial pond 195 feet in circumference; in the centre rose a monument, the foundations of which are still extant; and round the pond are similar but smaller monuments, pedestals, altars, or chapels, bearing the statue of Tlaloc.

In a few minutes my men unearthed no fewer than forty vases, several plates, goblets, in the same style as those found at Tenenepanco, save that the clay is coarser and the ornamentation more archaic. This beginning was so promising, that notwithstanding the bitter cold at night, only half-sheltered as

we were, my dreams were golden; and the next morning, after a hot cup of coffee mixed with a good dose of mezcal, we were eager to set to work again, when our "finds" were if anything more abundant, and similar to those of the previous day: idols, cups, three-footed goblets, pottery with Tlaloc's image; very few jewels, however, and no precious stones, whilst the total absence of human remains seems to indicate great antiquity for these remains.

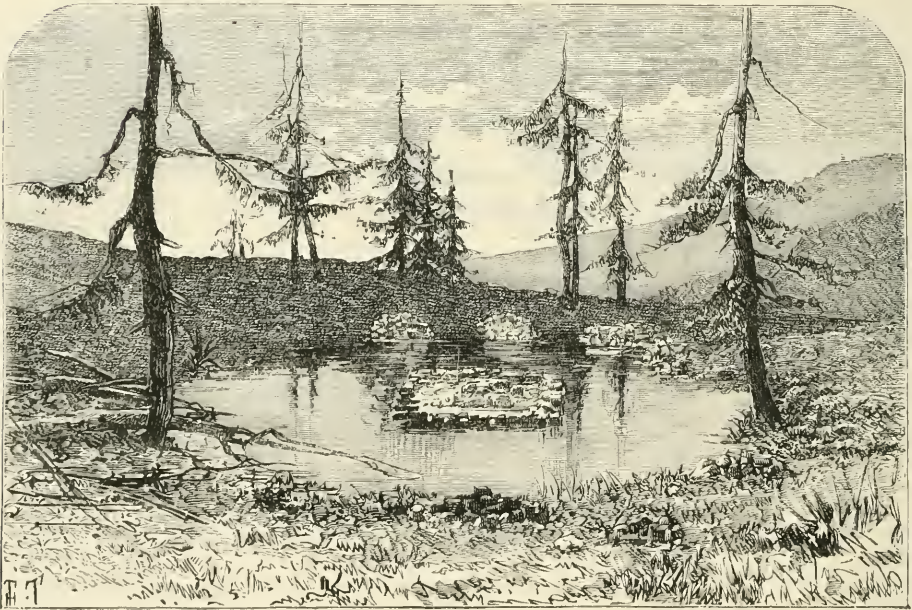
It may be well to mention that a small cup, bearing the image of Tlaloc and placed in the centre of the Tenenepanco Plate, belongs properly to Nahualac. It forms a pendant to another cup also in my possession. Both are quite unique in their way, for nothing in the Aztec antiquities recalls either the material, the shape, the ornamentation, or the workmanship. If this cemetery were Aztec, therefore, it must date back to the early establishment of that tribe in the valley; but in all probability it is either Chichemec or Toltec, for had it been Aztec, human remains would have been found, whereas it is well known that the Toltecs offered only birds, feathers, and flowers to their favourite god, and this leads us to suppose that Nahualac was one among the primeval Toltec stations.

Our four days' explorations produced nearly eight hundred pieces of all kinds. Our sanguine hopes had been more than realised, and with jubilant feelings we bade the mountain adieu; but alas! our treasure, like its predecessor, went to fill up the shelves of the Mexican Museum.

If the ascent had been painful, the descent was even more so. Leaving the Indians to follow with our luggage, Colonel Castro and I went in advance; but we soon lost our way, and rolled rather than walked down the steep, precipitous slopes of the mountain, whilst our horses, which we were leading, came upon us like avalanches, and often threatened our destruction.

We reached the plain at last, and a few minutes brought us to Ameca.

Our excavations on the high plateaux are over ; we leave for the warm region, to follow the Toltecs in their great migration at the beginning of the eleventh century.



POND OF NAHUALAC.



QUAY OF S. JUAN BAUTISTA.

CHAPTER XI.

BELLOTE.

Return to Vera Cruz—Toltec Cities—Quotations regarding Ancient Cities—Rio Tabasco at Frontera—S. Juan Bautista—Rio Gonzalès—Canoas—Lagoons—Bellote Islands—*Kjekkenmedings*—Temples at Bellote—Chronological and Ornamental Slabs—Las Dos Bocas—Cortez—Rio Seco—Paraíso.

WE are once more at Vera Cruz, *en route* for Tabasco, where we are received, as on our first arrival, with the terrible Norte, blowing so hard that no steamer can get away; and to do something I visit the Public Library, which, besides some interesting works, contains also specimens of Totonac antiquities, and a good Indian map on calico.

The wind changes, and we are at last able to go on board the steamer which is to convey us to the mouth of Rio Tabasco, sometime known as Grijalva, after the Spanish explorer; and here we leave our large ship for the river boat. The banks of this river are exceedingly flat and uninteresting; some king-fishers,

some white and blue herons, now and then a crocodile, are the only things which break the monotony of this dreary scene.

We stop at a small unhealthy village called Frontera, where we have to change again for S. Juan. The heat is suffocating ; our berths so close that we try the tops of our cabins, but no sooner are our mosquito curtains fixed, and ourselves, as we fondly imagine, settled for the night, than a shower of fiery sparks from the engine, which is fed with charcoal, sets our clothes on fire and obliges us to make a hasty retreat, the more so that the ship carries a large cargo of petroleum. Below, a lively night awaits us, and when from sheer weariness we fall asleep at last, we are rudely awakened by the cries of all the denizens of the forest.

A few habitations, a few fields under cultivation, some rare palm-trees, or a flock of sheep, warn us that we are getting near S. Juan. But all we can see at present from our steamer is a long line of low houses, nor is our first impression dispelled when we walk into this outlying, forlorn-looking town. Outward appearance, however, is proverbially deceitful ; it is particularly so here, for S. Juan is in reality the great mart of the State, and carries on an extensive trade in cedar, mahogany, and other fine wood. The population is simple, obliging, civil, every house open to us ; the Governor, a right good fellow, provides us with letters for the interior, and with men as guides and servants.

We have, unfortunately, just come in for the rainy season ; the roads are turned into torrents, and so completely broken that we have to give up going to Comala by land and shall have to go by water. This will necessitate a very long detour ; on the other hand it will give us the opportunity of visiting the interesting remains to be found at Bellote. Thus our misfortune will not be very great after all.

This point settled, we are soon ready to start for Tierra Colorada, a rancho some nine miles from S. Juan, on the banks of Rio Gonzalès, where we are to find flat-bottomed *canoas* and *bogas*, “oarsmen.” These *canoas* are hollowed out of the trunk of a tree, have no keels, and are rowed down stream, when the maximum speed is twelve leagues a day, and three up stream. Close to the landing-place is a wooden booth, where before going



CANOA (BOAT) OF S. JUAN.

on board we get about the nastiest cup of coffee I ever tasted, served with pretty grace by a handsome Meziza. We notice the cups, made of some fruit-shell shaped on the tree whilst growing, and I am so pleased with their shape and design that I buy two for my private collection.

Our *canoas*, which are of average size, do not allow two to sit abreast; the awning, *toldo*, which is to shelter us both against sun and rain, is so low that we have to crawl in on all-fours and sit Turkish fashion. This in a few hours becomes very painful,

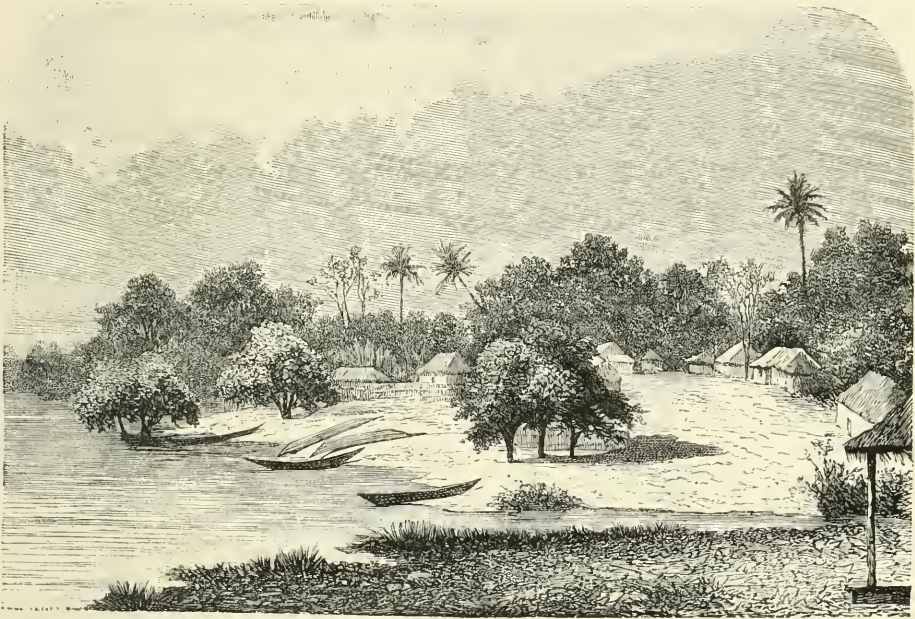
and our position is greatly aggravated by mosquitoes. There is not a breath of wind, so that our progress is but slow, whilst the heat under cover is intolerable; but whenever I venture out I am forced back either by the scorching sun or pouring rain, and we must needs comfort ourselves as best we can with some excellent Tabasco cigars. We lose nothing, for this region is but an assemblage of savannas and stunted woods, which lie for months under water.

We soon arrive at *Ceiba*, a rancho, where we land to breakfast under a wide-spreading tree by the river, depositing under its cool shade our provisions and our cramped, aching limbs. Here we are detained longer than we anticipated by our men, who, after refreshing themselves at the rancho, coolly walked some three miles further on to see their sweethearts. They hurry in at last looking rather sheepish, and we find on consulting our map that our next station is twelve miles distant, and that we shall not reach it till late in the evening. The heat abates as the dusk gathers in, when we are glad to leave our hateful *toldo* to breathe the freshening breeze.

We are now advancing amidst the islands, which occupy the mouth of the river, clad with gigantic mangroves; all around is silent, and the moon, placid but not cold in these latitudes, sheds her magic light over the landscape, shaping out fantastic groves, fairy castles, and long lines of porticoes in the openings of the forest. We are so delighted with all we see that we are quite surprised, after a run of sixteen hours, to find ourselves at the rancho of Las Islas, where we spend what remains of the night, and early the next morning start for Paraíso.

Up to this time we have been going steadily north, but now our route bears to the west. We enter the lagoons to be found on this coast, intersected by narrow canals, and overshadowed by deep, gloomy paths. The murky water of these

canals, the silence of the forest, recall the Styx, or some forgotten circle of Purgatory in which the dead wander in endless solitudes. Beautiful large butterflies, speckled with black and blue, come fluttering by, whilst a multitude of red hairy crabs glare at us out of some mangrove. Two hours' steady rowing brings us to Bellote Islands, when, stowing our boats on the sand, we hail the first man we see, and under his escort make for the



RANCHO AT BELLOTE.

cuyos, pyramids, walking by the shore of the island, the water of which is so transparent as to enable us to spy at the bottom of the lagoon a quantity of oyster-shells; presently we come upon a gigantic bank of them measuring several miles, by more than twelve feet high, *kjækkenmædings*; the whole ground around is composed of these broken shells, over which a magnificent vegetation luxuriates.

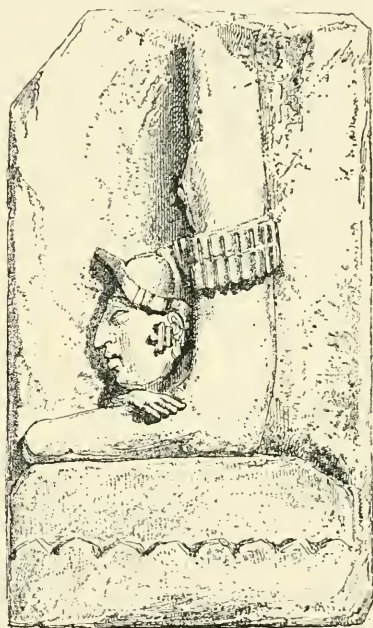
The pyramids, which are the object of our visit, are three in number, from 195 to 325 feet at the base, by 37 to 43 in

height. The temples which once stood on the summit are but a mass of ruins. Thanks to excavations made by the owner of the rancho, one side of one of the pyramids has been cleared of the vegetation and now a good view can be obtained, enabling us to perceive that it is identical in all respects with those at Tula and Teotihuacan, save that this is much smaller, the baby pattern, so to speak, of those we have hitherto visited. On the terrace crowning the pyramid a fragment of wall on an incline is still standing, covered with hard cement. This facing was composed of four layers of lime and mortar, each coating representing figures and characters in bas-reliefs, modelled in the lime coating. On removing one of these the next was discovered, almost invariably at the cost of nearly the whole bas-relief. We were fortunate in taking away intact the fragment shown in our plate, a head with retreating forehead resting on the instep of a foot which lies on a cushion. The notable feature of this profile is its similarity with those on the bassi-rilievi at Palenque, proving in my opinion the unity of civilisation of the two countries, save that priority of date must be awarded to Bellote. Besides these reliefs we found a vast quantity of broken arms, hands, ex-votos, pottery, etc.

It should be mentioned that these pyramids, unlike those at Teotihuacan, were built with shells and mud, and that baked bricks were only employed in the partition walls and those of the temples. That such materials should have been used was natural in a region where even gravel is unknown.

In speaking of the Toltec chronology, it was observed that on the new fire being rekindled, all house furniture was renewed, every dwelling and every temple repainted. Is it beyond the bounds of possibility to imagine that this custom received here its highest development, that the walls of the temples were covered with hieroglyphic coatings commemorating the age

which had just elapsed, and that each succeeding century received a layer similarly inscribed? Were this presumption substantiated, a starting-point would be obtained, enabling us to state that at the Conquest in 1520, this monument was four Indian centuries, or 208 years old, plus the fraction of the century just begun. I am well aware that this hypothesis is not borne out by scientific facts, and that I cannot even claim the honour of being the first in starting it, for I was forestalled by Stephens, who says: "In the remotest corridor of the palace, the wall was coated with lime, and broken in various places; I counted as many as six coatings, every one of which bore traces of paintings. In a corner were characters which looked as though they had been written with black ink. In our efforts to reach this, the whole thing came down and obliged us to desist." *



TEMPLE BAS-RELIEF, BELLOTE.

Granting our theory, the six layers at Palenque would be equivalent to 312 years, plus the fraction of the current century, which might bring it to 330 years at the Conquest, and about 690 years old up to the present time, an antiquity which may be reasonably accorded to Palenque, as the sequel will show.

As may have been noticed, these monuments are identical with those observed by the early Spaniards, and so often described by their historians; and if it is borne in mind that

* Stephens, "Incidents of Travels," vol. II. p. 316.

when the Toltecs were driven from the high plateaux they migrated south, and were found as early as 1124 established at Goatzacoalco, Tabasco, and Yucatan, by the envoys of Xolotl, the conclusion that the monuments under notice belong to this tribe must force itself upon every unbiassed mind.

We leave Bellote *en route* for Paraíso, following the course of Tomo, Largo, and calling at Ceiba, a small hamlet standing amidst a glorious landscape. Here once rose Cintla, a dependency of Tabasco, and this is the river which Grijalva discovered, which Cortez navigated, and on the banks of which he fought his great battle, against 40,000 or 50,000 Indians. Many are the proofs which can be brought to confirm our opinion: this river has but one mouth, and therefore can at no time have borne the name of *Las Dos Bocas*; we read that Cortez was obliged to use launches on account of its shallow waters, whereas vessels of great tonnage, drawing twelve feet of water, ply daily on it; the tide, moreover, advances farther in at Frontera than is reported by Diaz.* Herrera says that Cortez, whilst in this region, took up his position on an islet opposite the village: now there is but one very large island, and that nearly a mile below Frontera; that his soldiers crossed the river to reconnoitre, but the stream is so wide and so deep at that point, as to preclude the possibility of any fording-place; that the general traversed immense cocoa-plantations, yet none are to be seen about Frontera, whereas on Rio Seco, over which we float at this present moment, it is the principal cultivation. Herrera's account consequently is applicable in every respect to Rio Seco, with its two mouths, its impassable bar, and its fording-places; here was fought the great battle, not far rose the Indian capital, the name of which has not come down to us, but which

* Diaz del Castillo, tome 1. chaps. xxxiii. and xxxi.

is known as Comalcalco at the present day ; and we are of opinion that Ceiba, or Zeiba, is the village where Cortez, in the name of the king, took possession of the country.*

Cogolludo, in speaking of the first skirmishes of the Spaniards against the cacique of Tabasco, says : " They numbered over 12,000 entrenched behind some breastworks, but we made a sudden rush, forced them out of their defences, obliging them to fall back ; this they did like good soldiers without turning their backs, raining showers of arrows on us, until they reached the outward buildings of some temples, from which they took all they could carry. The enemy being now in full retreat, Cortez stopped all further pursuit, and here, in the name of His Majesty, he took possession of the country, drawing his sword and making three large cuts at a huge tree, which is called *Ceiba* by the natives, and which grew on the terrace of the temple, exclaiming that should any one question his right, he was ready to make it good with his sword and shield." †

It may be objected that this quotation proves nothing at all, that ceibas grow everywhere, and that the taking of possession could be easily effected on any spot of the Mexican soil. Just so ; yet a remarkable coincidence is this, that no ceibas grow about the village of that name, that the one cut by Cortez, owing to the rapid growth of such trees, must long since have disappeared, and that on my inquiring for " Ceiba " at the village supposed to be it, no one seemed to know.

It is a well-ascertained fact that an appellation given in honour of a great event to a certain spot lives on when the object which gave rise to it has perished. Is it so unreasonable to suppose

* Herrera, " Hist. General," Decade III. lib. vii. chap. iii. Torquemada, " Monarquia Indiana," tome i. lib. iv. chap. xi.

† Cogolludo, tome i. lib. i. chap. ix.

that the Spaniards who settled later at Ceiba, a spot consecrated by the taking of possession, on identifying Cortez' tree, should name the village they erected after it? If I make a running comment on history, if I discover points of analogy at every step, I do so whilst visiting carefully the very places under notice, bearing in mind historical accounts. These details are of vital importance in affirming the existence of Comalcalco at the time of the Conquest, as also that Rio Seco was then a large river whose course was turned by the Spaniards to ruin the Indian city, which rose on its banks.

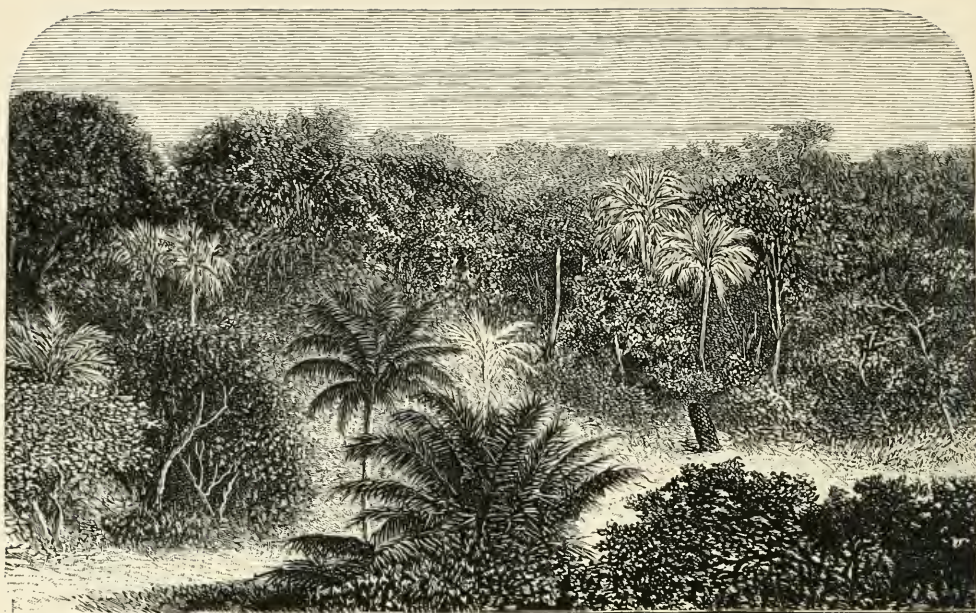
Of the beauty of the country between Ceiba and Paraíso no words of expression, no painter's brush could give an adequate idea: noble avenues of cocoa and palm-trees open out at almost every stroke of the oar; lovely plants of tender green, with light yellow clustering flowers, float down the rapid stream, forming fairy-like rafts which remind us of the Mexican chinampas. My admiration for this lovely scene around me, finds no echo among my travelling companions, who are either sleeping or differently engrossed. The longer I observe the high banks, the bed both wide and deep of this stream, now reduced to a torrent, the more firmly am I convinced that it was at some time a great river, whose course whether nature or man have altered within a comparatively recent period, and tradition here becomes historical truth.

We reach Paraíso at last; the name had prepared us for something better than the wretched hamlet where we land. It was destroyed, it seems, in a local affray, as the ruins, the fallen trunks of large trees sufficiently attest. Outward appearance is no sure index to gauge Paraíso or its "descalzado" inhabitants, who are in reality well-to-do. The good man who kindly offered to escort us about, is, for this country, quite wealthy; nor is he a solitary instance of friendliness, it seems

to pervade the whole community. The place has no hotel or inn of any kind, but a house is easily got to serve our purpose, as much food as we want is forced upon us by these good-natured people ; and if it is not quite English hospitality, it is very near it. The Paraísians are perfectly satisfied with their condition in life ; their wishes are few, and such as the fertility of the soil will easily meet ; want is unknown, life easy, the climate admits of but the scantiest clothing, and if they have more than their share of rain, they are troubled with fewer mosquitoes than most of their neighbours. In fact, these charming people are fully convinced that all is for the best in this best of worlds, and that if Paraíso is not heaven itself, it is not far from it.



TERRA-COTTA MASK, FOUND AT BELLOTE.



VIRGIN FOREST NEAR COMALCALCO.

CHAPTER XII.

COMALCALCO.

Description of Comalcalco—Fonda—Manners—Climate—Masks and Figures—Ruins—El Blasillo—Old Palaces Visited—Bricks and Bridges—Cemented Roads—Great Pyramid and its Monuments—Palace Described—Vases and Jicaras—Tecomates—Towers—Bas-reliefs—Small Pyramids and Temples—Reflexions—Disappearance of Indian Populations—Return to S. Juan—Don Candido—El Carmen—A Rich Wood-cutter.

THE road from Paraíso to Comalcalco is no road at all, a veritable "Slough of Despond," in which our horses sink to the hocks, sometimes to the girths, but as the natives see nothing to find fault in it, there is little hope of improvement. The road follows the course of Rio Seco, ancient Tabasco to our right, and three hours' march brings us to Comalcalco, a little modern town situated on an island of the river, some ninety miles north-west of S. Juan Bautista, and twenty-four, as a bird flies, from the

seaboard. The place, including the outskirts, numbers some two thousand inhabitants; the streets are straight, the houses low and built with bricks. The banks of the lagoons are clad with thick long grass, in which naked urchins and ducks innumerable seem to luxuriate all day long, alternating with plunges into the water, puffing at cigars nearly as big as themselves. Comalcalco is the very Elysium of life for both ducks and urchins.

Our "fonda" is not exactly luxurious, but the civility of the people, and the excellent cooking of our hostess, a handsome woman of five-and-twenty, combine to make life bearable. True, our beds are not water-proof, for the water gets in every time it rains, whilst the quacking of the ducks awakes us twenty times of a night; but as this seems to be the normal state of things, as nobody appears to mind, it behoves us not to be over fastidious in a country in which things are taken mighty easy. Salt, owing to the excessively damp climate, is liquid, and served in bottles. The terrible Norte is nearly as much felt here as in Vera Cruz; it brings invariably persistent rain, water-spouts, *trebunadas*, and frightful squalls. My camera has created a *furor* in this out-of-the-way place, and we are besieged all day with people wanting their portraits taken, to the delight of our "tendero"; meanwhile valuable time is spent in explanations and refusals before we can rid ourselves of these simple, troublesome people. No sooner, however, did our mission become known, than everybody was eager to come as guides, and workmen were obtained with the greatest facility.

The local doctor speaks enthusiastically of the ruins lying some six miles north-east of this place, and about a mile and a half from the river. Masks, pottery, idols of the description found at Teotihuacan, have been brought to light; but what was deemed far more important by the natives, an inexhaustible mine of baked bricks of every size, with which the houses of

the village have been built, and the main walk paved. When these excavations first began, statues, stones of sacrifice (indicative of later times), columns, huge flags, and cement were unearthed. Unfortunately the whole was destroyed by these ignorant people.

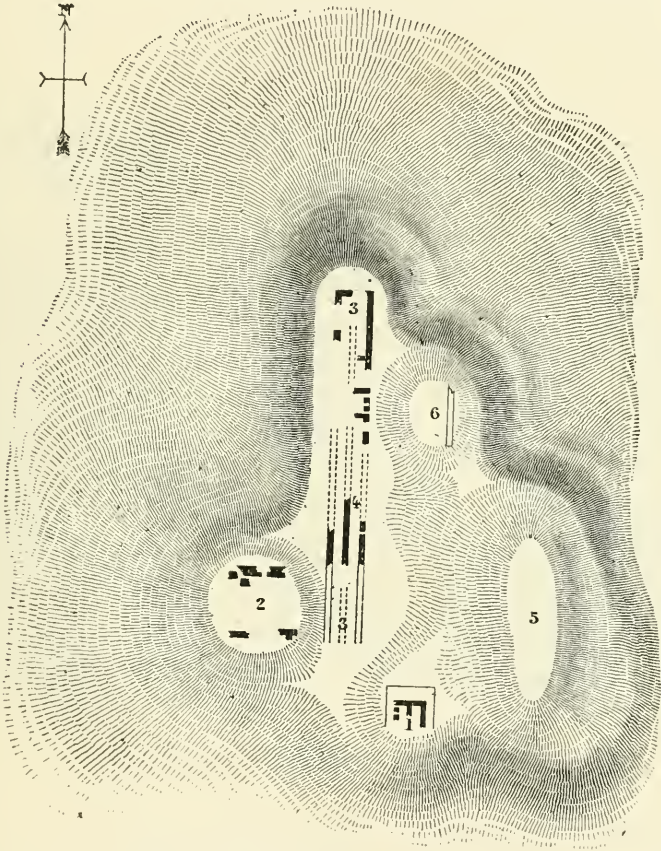
The ruins consist in groups of pyramids of different dimensions, so extensive as to cover twenty-four miles, and on this account are called the "Cordillera" by the natives. A country gentleman tells me that he has counted over three hundred of these artificial mounds on his own property, and that they were built with mud and baked bricks.

Besides these ruins others are to be met at Blasillo, situated on the Toltec march of migration, answering the description given by Bernal Diaz regarding Tonalá. I hear from a montanero, who first discovered them, that an important Indian city formerly existed there, whose monuments, like those of Comalcalco, consist of caryatides, columns, and statues; but in this abominable weather it is utterly impossible to visit them. This city having the same origin, the same environment with Comalcalco, must have the same origin; and Toltec migration, Toltec civilising influence being admitted as well as proved, these two cities would be among the first built by them after their great migration, for the simple reason that they stand nearest their point of departure, as the most distant would mark their later settlements; and this our investigations will amply demonstrate.

We set out for the ruins, following for a time the right bank of the Rio Seco; then a path across fields, bordered with large yellow and red flowers. We notice to our right and left thick layers of cement, the remains of the old Indian road which connected the city with the river. We cross rivulets formerly spanned by bridges, of which bricks and a corbel vault are still visible.

On reaching the pyramid, we leave our horses and ascend

with some difficulty the terrace surmounting it; we wander about in semi-darkness because of the rank vegetation which mantles over it. Our men clear it of the most obstructive trees, to facilitate its measurement: the shape of this pyramid is irregular, being 975 feet at the base, by some ninety-nine feet in height.



PLAN OF GREAT PYRAMID AT COMALCALCO.

No. 1, Tower partly standing. No. 2, Ruined Tower. No. 3, Palace. No. 4, Portion still standing. Nos. 5 and 6, Pyramids indicative of Ruins.

Our plan gives the various monuments standing on its vast summit, measuring no less than 292 feet.

The principal monument (No. 3) was a great palace, the façade of which looked east and covered 231 feet, now reduced to a ruinous mass; fortunately a fragment of some twenty-two

feet (No. 4) enables us to reconstruct the edifice. Our first drawing is a view of the outside, showing the dilapidated condition of the wall and its brick and mortar composition ; the next a view of the interior, with fragments of thinner walls which divided the various apartments of the palace, probably seven or eight in number, of different dimensions, and having the same characteristics as the monuments at Uxmal and Palenque. It

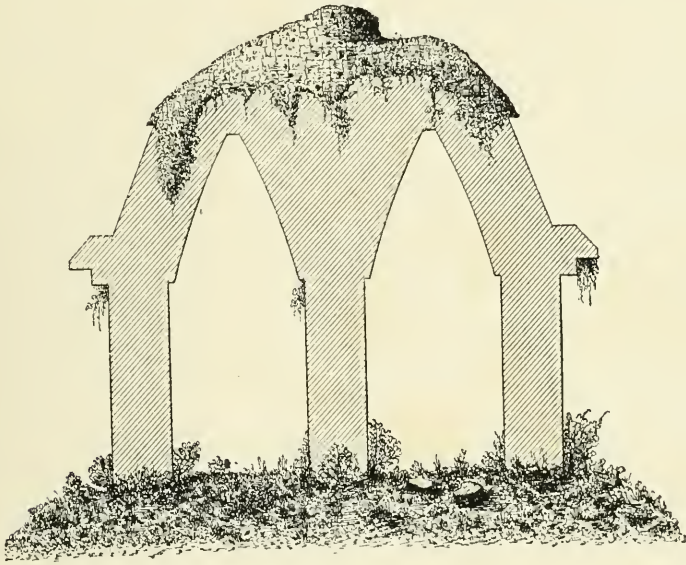


BAYS OF RUINED PALACE, COMALCALCO.

is the governor's palace with its double bay of rooms, the slightly concave vault of Palenque ; and if in our section of the palace a greater obliquity is observable, in the frieze supporting the roof, than in edifices of the same kind already known, or to be studied subsequently, this sloping finds here its proper place, and proves the intelligence of the builder without destroying the similarity of the different monuments. In fact, we shall see the roof assuming a steeper or less steep incline, according to the climate ; slightly oblique at Palenque where rain is frequent, it rises in the Yucatan

peninsula, where a dry climate prevails, until it forms a flat roof, resting on perpendicular walls; whereas at Comalcalco and on the borders of the Gulf, where rain is incessant, architects increase the slope of the roof to facilitate the out-flow of the water, the better to preserve their buildings.

If baked bricks mixed with thick layers of lime and mortar were substituted for stones, it is because none are to be found in that alluvial plain. As to the blocks necessary for the con-



SECTION OF RUINS AT COMALCALCO.

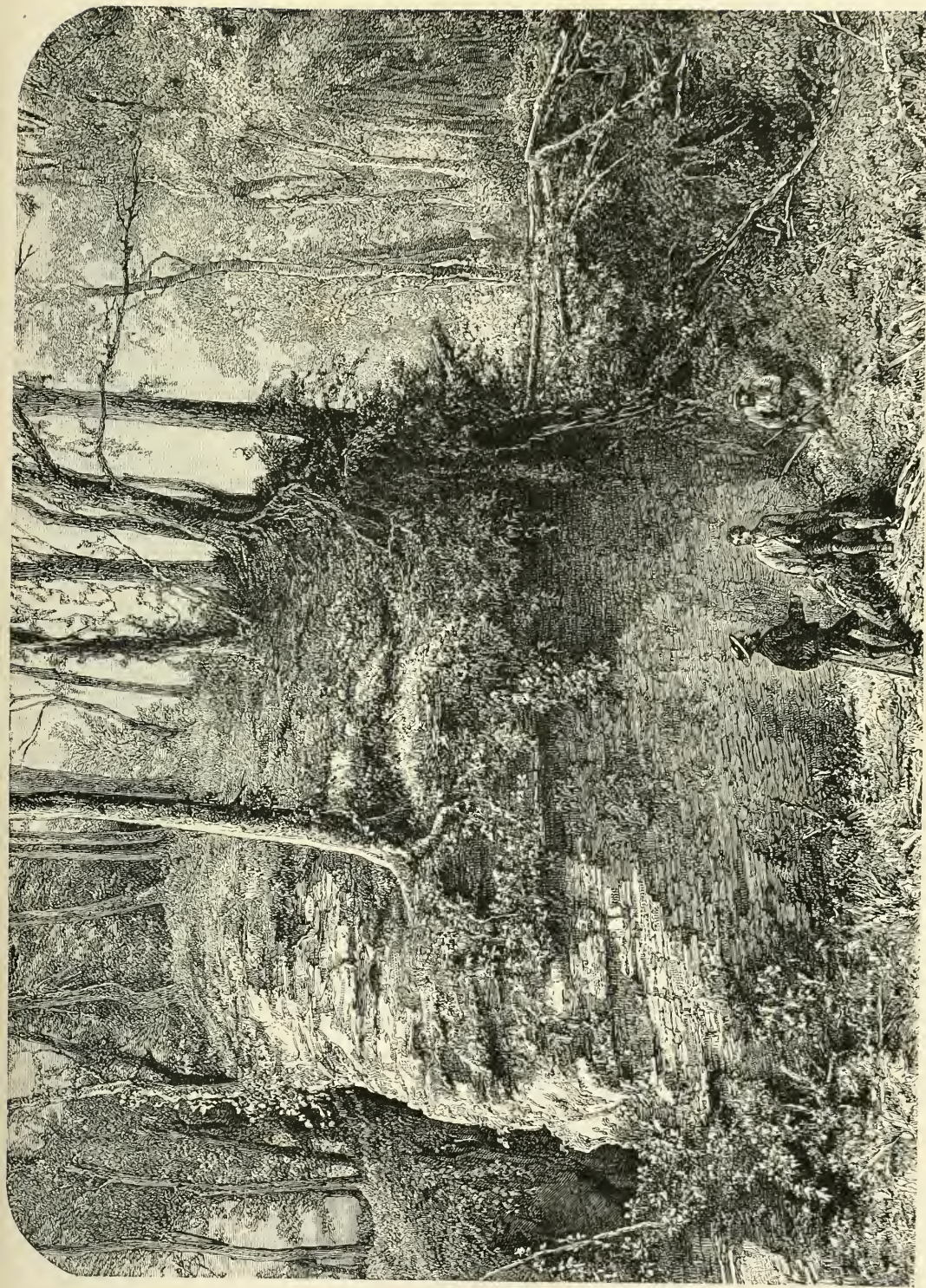
struction of columns, statues, altars, etc., they were brought by river from the mountains. But these modifications never destroy the typical outline of the Toltec calli, to be found in the chapter on Tula, and all the monuments which we shall meet with in our explorations will have the same type and the same architecture.

But to return. The walls of the palace were without any ornamentation, save a layer of smooth painted cement; they rose perpendicularly nine feet to a very projecting cornice,

then sloping in a line parallel to the corbel vault, they terminated in a second cornice less salient than the first, both serving as frame to a frieze richly decorated, so far at least as could be ascertained from the fragments strewn the ground. Above this, towards the centre of the roof, rose a decorated wall, a peculiarly Toltec device, which existed already in the temples of the high plateaux, and which we shall observe in most structures, whether temples or palaces, terra-cotta models of which are to be found in the Trocadéro.

The building, including the walls, measures some 26 feet, the walls are 3 feet 9 inches in thickness, the size of the apartments is about 8 feet, and the depth of the vault inside some 23 feet (see Plate). The palace was brightly painted, as may yet be seen in the north corner, which is of a deep red. The miscellaneous compound to be met at Tula and Teotihuacan is not observable here, where obsidian came from a great distance and was accordingly rare; pottery was consequently replaced by fruit-shells, which had the advantage of being more durable, cheaper, and lighter. These shells are worked into a variety of shapes differing in size and value: there are the *jicaras*, small cups, pure and simple; *tecomates*, large cups; *atotoniles*, *cubiletes*, *cocos*, etc.; then the *jicara-flor*, or half-shell cut crosswise; the most prized of all, the *jicara-boton*, half upper shell; the *jicara-barba*, or shell cut lengthwise. All these shells are given elegant shapes whilst growing on the tree, and when dry are ornamented with pretty devices either sunk or in relief. A calabash having a very large shell is also fashioned into a vase called *atecomate* by the Indians, and painted with fast colours of which the natives alone seem to have the secret.

But if few fragments were found in comparison with those unearched on the high plateaux, I had the good fortune to pick up two bricks covered with curious sunk designs, most rare, for



RUINS OF PALACE.

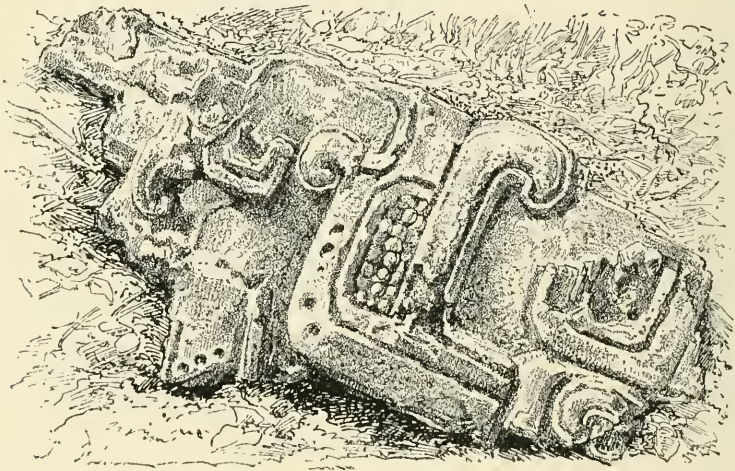
they were the only two specimens I could find of the kind. A concentric drawing covers the first, whilst the second bears the full likeness of a warrior, with feathers about his head—it is a rude drawing which was done on the soft clay before it was baked. Both bricks are in the Trocadéro.

Some 35 feet to the south-east of the palace, on a cemented platform over 26 feet broad by 38 feet long, is a tower (No. 1 in our plan) which is supported and bound by the roots of large trees surrounding it. It is oblong in shape, most picturesque, and, save the base, similar to that at Palenque. This tower has three storeys, of which two are still standing, and it may be assumed from what remains that the second storey was divided into four compartments or small rooms, the dimensions of which are the following: two inner rooms, of 5 feet 7 inches on one side, correspond to other two, and form a kind of outward passage, having three openings, which are separated by two pillars of 2 feet on one side. The first storey underneath reproduced probably the same distribution. We penetrated in the only accessible room, measuring some 8 feet by 5 feet 8 inches.

The ornamentation of this tower must have been gigantic; the fragment which was found among a heap of rubbish, and which we reproduce, is no less than 6 feet. The figures or characters seen on the wall, and which recall Arabic inscriptions, are over 3 feet high, and in strong relief. This was obtained by applications of freshly-made plaster—a process belonging to the first epoch, and which we shall meet at Palenque, Tikal, and particularly Aké and Izamal in the Yucatan peninsula.

Tower No. 2, some 32 feet to the south-east of the palace, is a ruinous mass, but must have been far more important than the first. Nothing remains save fragments of walls, so shapeless as to make it difficult to draw an approximate plan of the building. To the north, however, a flight of steps

in fair preservation allows us to reconstruct the first storey. The four sides were probably similar, having doors opening on the stairs by which the terrace was reached, giving access to four rooms, now underground, of about 8 feet by 6 feet 8 inches. Our drawing gives the stairs and the entrance to one of the rooms. In this tower the ornamentation must have been as peculiar as that of No. 1, as shown by an enormous unbroken fragment of wall lying on the ground, representing the full-size figure of a man, whose fine proportions are very remarkable. The upper portion



ORNAMENTATION OF SOUTH-EAST TOWER, COMALCALCO.

of the body, the fore-arm, and part of the leg are wanting ; of the clothing nothing remains save the girdle and a bit on the thigh. The statue had presumably no other covering but the maxtli, as is the case at Palenque in the decoration of the inner wing of the palace.

This tower (No. 2), with its flight of steps and its platform on which rose the body of the edifice, answers the description of similar monuments at Cozumel and along the seaboard given by Oviedo and Grijalva's chaplain ; and both towers and palaces, as also the temples we shall visit later, must have gleamed on

the astonished gaze of the Spaniards, as did those of the maritime cities in Yucatan. We know that the first were inhabited at the time of the Conquest; have we not the right to affirm as much for Comalcalco? And if Comalcalco was inhabited, what shall



REMAINS OF TOWER NO. 2, AND ENTRANCE OF SUBTERRANEAN HALL.

be said of Palenque, where we shall find a far greater number of buildings in better preservation?

It seems to us a settled question. Why should monuments constructed in the same way, in the same country, amidst the same vegetation, be in ruins when others are partly standing?

Does this prove that they are of more recent date? The same causes acted on all. Everything points to their similarity, to their belonging to the same epoch, to their being the work of the same hand; and if the palaces and temples at Comalcalco were extant and inhabited at the Conquest (and everything seems to prove it), the temples and palaces at Palenque must have been in the same condition.

But the palace and the two towers were not the only monuments on the terrace of the pyramid. No. 5 and No. 6 indicate the site of other buildings now completely ruined, whilst the sides were occupied by small chapels, traces of which are still discernible. The pyramid was in itself a small village, or rather an immense lordly mansion, having a palace, temples, houses, and huts for priests and servants. Facing this pyramid, to the north, hidden by the luxuriant vegetation of a virgin forest (reproduced in our drawing), are three other pyramids, of which two rise to the height of some 22 to 26 feet, and the third from 39 to 45 feet. All were crowned by temples, the walls of which are still standing. The layers of demolished cement leave uncovered the body of the wall, in which I notice bricks ranging from 6 in. by 9 by 1 in thickness, and from about 1 ft. 4 in. by 11 by 1 in. thick, and 1 ft. 11 in. by 1 ft. 8 in. by 1 ft. 2 in. thick. The largest were used for the corners. Hundreds of other pyramids, every one occupied by palaces, stretch as far as the seaboard, buried in the depths of the forest, presenting innumerable monuments to be brought to light, for which years, numerous workmen, an iron constitution, are required for the future explorers. I have shown the way—let others follow.

The stupendous ruins, of which we have had but a glimpse, imply an immense amount of labour, and, as a corollary, a dense population. It is quite clear that the present Tabasco, with a population of 100,000 inhabitants, could not produce monuments

so imposing as those at Comalcalco, and this is one of the chief objections brought against the recent date we ascribe to these buildings. But then the question arises, who built them ages before the Conquest, and what became of the numerous population which such monuments presuppose? The genius of the Toltecs which we have studied, the quotations of various authors relating to their southward migration, point to them as the sole and true creators of these buildings which we have even now visited, as also those we shall subsequently explore. They found—facts attest it—a numerous population, which they civilised, and which under their peaceful organisation rapidly increased. They had, at the very outset of their establishment, the cheapest, easiest labour ever known in these hardy, sober, submissive people, who, as we noticed before, could live on two tortillas a day, drink nothing but water, carry enormous loads, or work all day without showing fatigue.

If, then, due regard be had to their numbers, their endurance, and their frugal habits, if it be remembered that New Mexico was built in no time by Cortez, the whole city of Tula reconstructed in six years, most likely by statute-labour when great multitudes were pressed into service, directed by foremen who gave the final polishing touch to the work, the number and the bulk of the monuments they have left will not surprise. That such work could be achieved in a very short time is shown at Teotihuacan, where the pyramids are but an assemblage of mud and rude stones kept together by walls faced with coatings of polished cement.

Furthermore, it is an accepted fact that a high state of civilisation can only be developed in temperate regions; in torrid zones the heat, an almost spontaneous growth, the few wants of man, keep him idle and unfit him for work, and this consideration would, in the absence of any other proof, still point

to the Toltecs as the authors of the degree of civilisation observable in these regions. As an instance of the truth of our argument look at India, where a foreign race introduced and implanted a ready-made civilisation in the invaded country, using the conquered race for the construction of its buildings. This theory receives still greater weight when we remember how easily a people which has received its civilisation through another, falls back into its original state of barbarism as soon as left to itself ; India, Cambodia, Java, are striking examples.

But it will be asked, What has become of the dense population you speak about ? Where are the millions of men who peopled these regions at the time of the Conquest ? The causes which contributed to their disappearance are not far to seek. First and foremost, the Spanish invasion and the consequent destruction of the Mexican empire, which so deeply disturbed the organisation of all these peoples as to be felt in the most distant provinces ; it was a commotion followed by a profound discouragement and apathy, which told directly and radically on the fecundity of the race. Add to this the intense horror felt for the conquerors—a horror so complete as to cause the natives to abandon the places occupied by the hated foreigners—a stupor so great as to have persisted to the present day. Even now Indian villages are abandoned at the appearance of a Spaniard, and again occupied when he leaves, as was the case at Tayasal when taken by the Spanish general Martin Ursua. So much for moral causes.

As to physical causes, historians will tell us they were due to the unheard-of cruelty of the Spaniards—a cruelty all the more inconceivable that Mendieta ascribes to the natives a mild, simple, submissive, patient disposition, in fact all the Christian virtues so conspicuously absent from their hard taskmasters, who were guilty towards the poor Indians of daily savage acts which dis-

honour humanity, tearing them from their families and sending them to work the mines in the distant mountains, etc.*

Then there were epidemics which swept away vast numbers of Indians: 1st, small-pox in 1521, called by the natives *huey-zahuatl*, "great leprosy"—half the population succumbed under it; 2nd, measles (*sarampion*), in 1531, *tepiton-zahuatl*, small leprosy; 3rd, syphilis; 4th, bloody-flux in 1545, when in Tlascala and Tula 250,000 Indians perished; lastly, the various epidemics of 1564, 1576, 1588, 1595, which carried off over 3,000,000 natives. The same epidemics were felt *with greater severity* in Tabasco and Yucatan.† Herrera gives likewise measles, small-pox, bloody-flux, fever, dysentery, as the main causes of the disappearance of the aborigines;‡ as does Motolinia, who mentions besides the great famine consequent on the taking of Mexico; "encomiendas," and especially the heavy fiscal burdens imposed on the poor Indians by the Spaniards, burdens which had to be paid under penalty of being tortured to death.§ Other authorities might be adduced to show that the disappearance of the Indians, if unnatural, is to be explained, it being clear that the great cities, so thickly populated on the arrival of the Spaniards, were almost entirely abandoned, whilst the temples and palaces, left to the mercy of the elements and the ruthless efforts of man, were quickly destroyed. If we could wonder, it is that under such circumstances they resisted so long.

As structures, American monuments cannot be compared with those at Cambodia, which belong to nearly the same period, the twelfth century, and which, notwithstanding their greater and more resisting proportions, are found in the same dilapidated condition

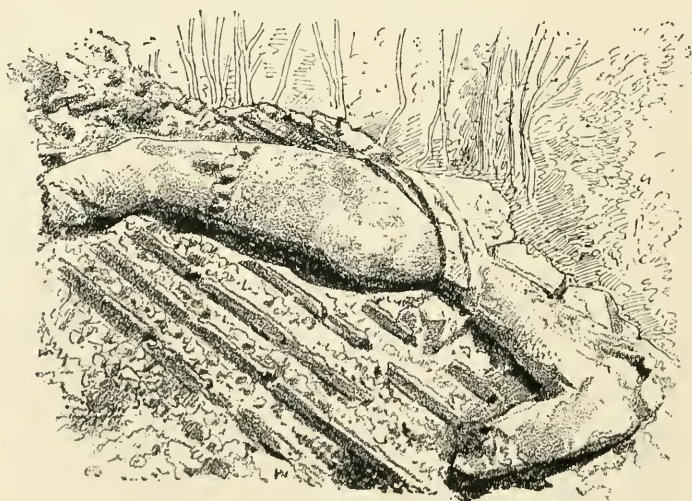
* Mendieta, "Hist. Ecclesiastica Indiana," lib. III. cap. xxi.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Herrera, "Hist. Gen.," Decade III. lib. vii. cap. iii.

§ Motolinia, "Icazbalceta," treatise I. chap. i.

But we must think of returning to S. Juan ; we take leave of our Comalcalcan friends, leaving our "bogás," boatmen, to follow with our traps by water, and meet us at S. Juan, whilst we start on horseback by a shorter route, skirting Rio Seco on our right, with its islands clad with a glowing vegetation. On the opposite side fields of yellow maize, sugar, coffee, and cocoa, indicate the presence of ranchos and haciendas. We get glimpses of the red, yellow, and green madrina-berries peeping out of glistening foliage, and towards four o'clock we knock at a large hacienda, the property of Don Candido Verao, an amateur antiquarian, glad of an opportunity of showing his little collection. From him we learn that tumuli or basements of Indian chapels abound in the neighbourhood, and that many small figures are found, showing the country to have once been densely populated. Here we spend a charming evening, and on the morrow we start for El Carmen, on the left bank of the river Tabasco, belonging to a rich mahogany contractor, by name Don Policarpio Valenzuela. Thanks to his civility, we were able to procure canoes and be at S. Juan Bautista the next day.



BAS-RELIEF OF WEST TOWER, COMALCALCO.



S. DOMINGO DEL PALENQUE.

CHAPTER XIII.

LAS PLAYAS AND PALENQUE.

From S. Juan to Jonuta—S. Carlos—Indians and Alligators—Las Playas and Catasaja—Stone Cross—Rancho at Pulente—Palenque—The Two Slabs in the Temple of the Cross—First Engravings—Acala and Palenque from Cortez—Letter to the King—Palenque and Ocosingo mentioned by Juarros—Explorations—The Palace—Façade and Pyramids—Ornamentation on the Eastern Façade—An Old Relief Brought to Light—Palenque Artists and their Mode of Working—Medallions and Inner Passage—Reliefs in the Main Court—Apartments and Decorations—Inner Wing and Restoration—Western Façade—Palace Tower.

THE land route from S. Juan to Palenque is some thirty or thirty-five leagues; but we were obliged to go by water, which takes about a week, on account of our heavy luggage, consisting of seventy packages! Seventy packages may seem disproportionately large; but it should be recollected that we had to

take impressions, photographs, plans, and last, not least, provide for two months' living amidst ruins. A small steamer was secured, which was to convey us as far as Jonuta, where we should leave it for canoes.

Jonuta was once a populous centre, as the pyramids which occupy part of the village site amply testify. Here antiquities of all kinds have been unearthed, and an enthusiastic archæologist, Mr. Nattes, possesses a fine collection, which he was kind enough to show me. In it I found many objects very like, sometimes identical with, those on the plateaux. Mr. Nattes is of opinion that the Toltecs occupied the country throughout, and that all the monuments we see were left by them. I need not say that I am delighted to find my theory shared by so distinguished a person.

On the 20th December we at last take possession of our canoes. We row up the Usumacinta, and the next evening are at Potrerillo—a miserable rancho, where the only accommodation is a low, filthy hut, our evening meal a monkey—rather a pleasant change after our salt provisions.

After Potrerillo we scud for some hours along El Chico; then by canal, “rumpido,” as far as Catasaja, leaving on our right S. Carlos lagoons, inhabited by Indians who live partly on crocodiles and alligators—a diet which seems to agree with them, for they are accounted the hardiest men in the State.

I had visited these parts in my first expedition, when I noticed live tailless crocodiles in most huts I went into, lying on their backs, their claws and jaws nailed to the ground

“The tail is cut off,” said mine host, “lest in moving it they should break the legs of the person near.”

“But how do you capture these horrible creatures?”

“In two ways: with a stout hook, or with the hand.”

"Here," I said, "is a piastra for the man who will procure me such a sight."

Mine host looked round, called to a young Indian who was outside, and informed him of my wish.

"All right, Señor, nothing easier; come in a boat to the stream on the other side of the village."

In a few minutes we were at the place of rendezvous, where we found the Indian ready awaiting us, a dagger in his hand, cautioning us to follow without making a noise, as he walked along the high grass which grew on the banks. Suddenly two alligators plunged into the water, and Cyrilo was after them almost at the same time.

After a few minutes, which seemed hours, we spied the tail of the monster violently beating the surface of the water, then the whole body emerged with Cyrilo adhering to the alligator's belly, then both disappeared again, leaving behind a long bloody streak.

"Well done, Cyrilo, well done!" cried Don Juan.

Yet all that could be seen was the commotion of the water where the struggle was going on; a few minutes more and Cyrilo came up, this time alone, breathing hard, covered with mud, and swimming towards us. I stretched out my hand to help him in, but he leaped into the boat without assistance and sat down quite still for one minute.

"*Este can me cortò el dedo*—this dog broke my finger," he said, holding up his hand, of which the first joint of the forefinger was hanging down. "*Però me lo pagò*—but I paid him out, and I reckon we'll soon see his ugly mug. But if not I'll be after him again."

Don Juan winked at me. The man was preparing to plunge once more into the murky water when Don Juan exclaimed:

"There he is belly upmost, his breast seamed by four thrusts."

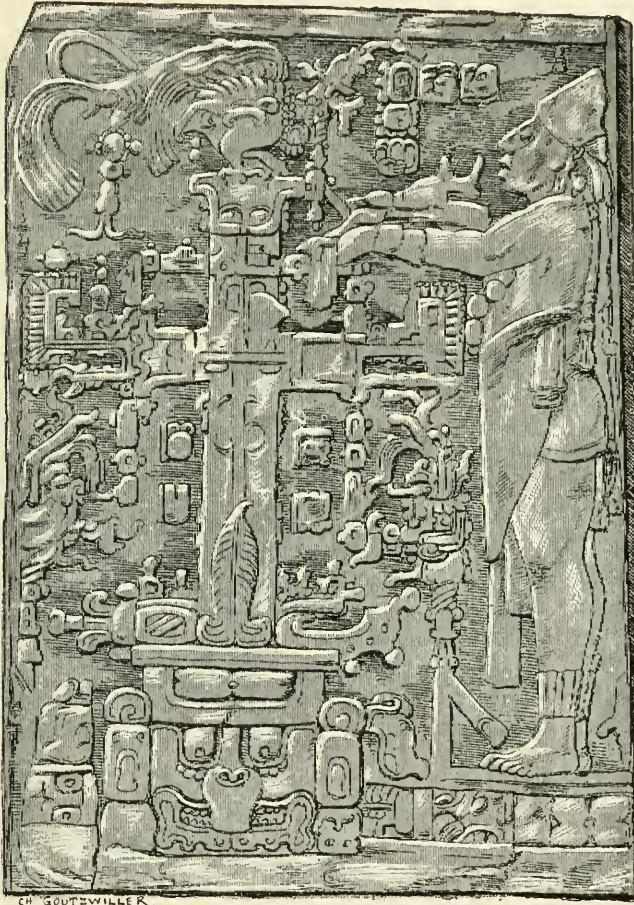
We secured and towed him to the village. He measured 14 feet 4 inches. I gave the man two piastras instead of one, and twenty francs for his dagger, in commemoration of his feat.

But to return. We plough along the swollen canal, we lose our way, and in a short time find ourselves among shrubs and towering trees; with some difficulty we get back to the lagoon and reach Las Playas de Catasaja late in the evening, when we take possession of an empty house in which to dispose of our party and our numerous packages.

Our next destination is S. Domingo, eight miles distant, but no carriers to convey our luggage are to be found for love or money; our plight might have been awkward had not the mayor offered to send to Palenque to procure as many men as can be had. Meanwhile, we find enough to engage our attention in the place. Don Rodriguez, a Government Inspector of Mines, has lately had the central stone cross which stood in the temple bearing the same name at Palenque, brought here. This tablet, now so well known, has had a chequered existence.

Some thirty years ago, it was taken from its place, and left lying in a forest adjoining the town by the thief, who was unable to carry it further. It was unbroken in 1858, when I found it covered with moss, and took a rather good photograph. A squeeze of the entire monument, composed of three pieces, is to be seen in the Trocadéro. Curiously enough, these pieces are scattered in different countries: one is still *in situ*, the second at Las Playas, whilst the third is in the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. We give a drawing of this interesting cross, crowned by a symbolic bird, to which a man standing presents an offering. Since the cross was a symbol of Tlaloc, the temple in which it stood must have been dedicated to him, and perhaps Quetzalcoatl also, and it is clear that it was of the same origin as the sepulchral cross at Teotihuacan;

but contrary to some writers, who make the latter proceed from the former, we make the first proceed from the second, for in everything we must go from the simple to the complex, and the primitive style, the simplicity, the archaic aspect of



MOULDINGS IN THE TEMPLE OF THE CROSS NO. 1.

the cross at Teotihuacan, make it an ascendant and not a descendant of the imaged cross at Palenque, covered with ornamentation denoting an advanced period.

Meanwhile, the men from Palenque have arrived, and our freight is transported in three days to S. Domingo, whither we follow by the last train. After Las Playas, the landscape

opens out into a noble perspective of fields and shady groves ; now the eye wanders over the rich flora of the savanna, now it plunges into the unfathomable depths of the forest, through which the road is a succession of triumphal arches, sometimes so closed in as to seem impassable from a short distance. We start hares and peccaries innumerable ; we hear the shrill cries of aras, mingled with the howling of *zaraguatos*, gravely regarding us from their leafy bowers, whilst on the outskirts of the wood, a timid deer gives an astonished look as we approach, ere he betakes himself to green and deeper retreats. To crown the enjoyment of this charming ride, we found a plentiful luncheon awaiting us at the Pulente rancho ; bananas and oranges, which we plucked ourselves from the trees, composed our dessert.

The evening found us at S. Domingo, where we took up our quarters with one of two European families settled here. Again the delay caused by the carriers gave us time to take an impression of two slabs, which were formerly inlaid in the pillars supporting the altar in the Temple of the Cross No. 1. In 1840 Stephens found them in the house of two elderly spinsters, who refused to part with them ; but after their death the Municipality declared them public property, and had them put up in the church façade, where they are now to be seen ; one of them, however, is broken into three pieces. Their dimensions are 6 feet by about 3 feet. The left slab represents a young man magnificently arrayed ; he wears a richly-embroidered cape, a collar and medallion round his neck, a beautiful girdle to his waist ; the ends of the maxtli are hanging down front and back, cothurni cover his feet and legs up to the knee. On the upper end of his head-dress is the head of a stork, having a fish in his bill, whilst others are ranged below it.

The cross on the altar justifies our seeing in this gorgeously-

attired young man another personification of the god of rain, of spring, of verdure and water, symbolised by the fishes and the stork's head, attributes which are found also on the basement of the Tlaloc of Tacubaya. The other slab represents an old man,



Left Pillar.



Right Pillar.

SCULPTURED STONES, TEMPLE OF THE CROSS NO. 1.

clothed in a tiger's skin, blowing out air, with a serpent round his waist, whose tail curls up behind and coils in front, the well-ascertained attributes of Quetzalcoatl, god of wisdom. Tlaloc and Quetzalcoatl are often seen side by side ; and we shall meet them

in the Temple of the Cross, when we shall be in a position to advance with some show of truth that the same was dedicated to both deities.*

After much disagreeable and unavoidable delay, we found ourselves at Palenque, some six and a half miles east of S. Domingo; we start immediately for the ruins, which are made accessible by a path through the woods opened by Don Rodriguez. El Rio Michol, to the north, seems the limit of the ancient city on that side; to the right and left, starting from the Rio, mounds, hillocks, and vestiges of ruins are noticeable. To the south, the Rio Chacamas washes the base of lofty peaks, which, on this side, encompass the last traces of habitations; the path winds up broad rising ground, seemingly artificial. At a turn of the road, the men carrying our baggage admonish us to look at the palace, which we should never have spied out owing to the luxuriant vegetation which completely hides it. But before we describe the ruins, we will say a few words respecting Cortez' march through Acala and Honduras. Some writers, thinking the former a city, have attempted to identify it with Palenque, an error which we hope to be able to dispel.

In this ill-advised expedition, his personal retinue consisted of two pages, several musicians, dancers, jugglers, and buffoons, showing more of the effeminacy of an Oriental than the valour of a hardy commander. The Spanish force, amongst whom was Guatemozin, the cacique of Tacuba, and a number of Indians as carriers and attendants, was swelled by 3,000 Mexicans.† Two ships with supplies were to sail along the coast under the command of Simon de Cuenca. From Goatzacoalco, Cortez followed the coast, halted at Tonalá, at Ayagualulco, and

* Sahagun, "Hist. General de las Cosas de la Nueva España," lib. i. cap. v., and lib. ii. cap. i.

† Bernal Diaz, "Conquest of New Spain," tome ii. chap. clxxiv.

seven leagues further crossed a river over a bridge 3,250 feet long; next came Mazapa, whose course runs from Chiapas to Los Dos Brazos. After this point the names mentioned by Diaz are not known; but the march must have been continued along the coast, since inland caciques, some even from distant Teapa, sent Cortez fifty transports with supplies; now the only way for canoes was by El Blanquillo and modern Tabasco. The force must have passed near Frontera or east of it, skirting El Chilapa, an affluent of El Tabasco, and halting at Tepetitán at the head of Chilapa, called next at Iztapan and Acala Mayor, where Cortez was informed by the natives that they would have three large streams and three smaller ones to cross; probably the Usumacinta and its tributaries. That this was the line of march is certain, for had Cortez passed Palenque, he would have had no rivers to cross, and could have marched south without obstacles; whereas the *compass* and the map furnished the only clue to extricate them from the gloomy labyrinth in which they were involved, and Cortez and his officers, with their chart on the ground, anxiously studied the probable direction of their route, which they decided was to be in *an eastern direction*.

With the aid of the map furnished by the Indians, and such guides as they could pick up, they continued their march through other villages, and must have passed Ziguatpec, sixteen leagues further, when Cortez inquired of the caciques where the *deep and large river* he saw discharged itself, and whether they had observed vessels sailing on the sea. He was told that the river discharged itself at Xicalango, situated on one of the tributaries of the Usumacinta, some twenty or twenty-five leagues from Palenque as a bird flies—a considerable distance in these wooded regions.

From Ziguatpec Cortez sent two of his followers to look for the ships, which had orders to wait at Xicalango; but when

they reached the place they found the crews had been massacred and the ships destroyed by the Indians.

The Spaniards next halted at Acalan, a *district composed of some twenty villages*; very unlike the approaches to Palenque, which is situated on the first rising ground of the Cordillera. Cogolludo,* who follows Herrera, says that the capital of the great province of Acalan was Izancanac, whose king, Apoxpalon, had a palace sufficiently large to accommodate all the Spaniards without displacing the inmates, and that the multitudes of Indian auxiliaries were quartered in the town. This does not tally with what is known of Palenque, where, save the palace, all the houses and temples were too small ever to have made it possible to accommodate large numbers, unless they were distributed all over the town.

All the various indications we can glean with regard to Izancanac, lead us to assume that it was situated somewhere on the banks of S. Pedro, a confluent of the Usumacinta, an assumption which becomes almost a certainty, since that was the direct road to Honduras, and still more so when we find that they held on their toilsome way in the direction of Peten, reaching Chaltuna and Tayasal after three or four days' march, to do which, had they come from Palenque, they must have employed at least twenty days.

But what has become of Izancanac? Where are the great buildings which could accommodate hundreds of people? The very site is unknown, whilst Palenque is still to be seen.† Although it is so difficult to determine the route held by Cortez, it affords, nevertheless, the best account we have relating to the organisation of the regions he traversed. He observed throughout independent caciques, a country divided into more or less important

* Cogolludo, "Hist. de Yucatan," tome i. chaps. xiii., xiv., xv.

† Bernal Díaz, tome ii. chaps. clxxv., clxxvi., clxxvii.

provinces, making it probable that the civilising and powerful influence which had knit these peoples into a mighty empire, had long ceased to be felt among these restless populations which, left to their warlike instincts, lived in constant warfare, as, for instance, in Yucatan after the fall of the dominant Cocomes and Tutulxius.

But to return. That Palenque was standing at that time, or at any rate had not been long abandoned, is placed beyond a doubt by Jose Antonio Calderon,* in his letter dated 15th December, 1774, in which he mentions having discovered eighteen palaces, twenty great buildings, and a hundred and sixty-eight houses, in one week, clearly proving that the forest which has grown since over the structures had not assumed such vast proportions, and that some idea could still be formed of the city; and if such was the case at that date, are we not justified in our assumption that this city was standing and inhabited at the Conquest in 1520?

Before Calderon, Garcia in 1729 had already mentioned the ruins of Palenque, but unfortunately his work has not been found; and Juarros, in his account of Chiapas,† says: "There is no doubt that this region has been inhabited by a cultured and mighty nation, shown in the imposing piles of buildings at Culhuacan and Tollan, traces of which are noticeable near Ocosingo and Palenque." *Tollan* (Palenque), Culhuacan (Ocosingo), bespeak that these names were still remembered by the Indians as late as the seventeenth century, that they owed their origin to the Toltecs, since the same appellations occur on the plateaux, and were carried by the emigrants to their later settlements in remembrance of their older ones—a constant practice among the Indians; and their wanderings from north to south were marked by cities and colonies having appellations which are found both on the plateaux and in Chiapas. The same thing happens now

* "Origin of American Indians," book II. chap. i. p. 46. Madrid, 1729.

† Juarros, "Compend. de la Hist. de la Ciudad de Guatemala," tome I. chap. iv.

in every new colony, for which instances might be given *ad infinitum*.

Fray Tello tells us that the Spaniards found in Jalisco localities and cities whose names existed already in the Mexican Valley, such as Ameca, Culhuacan, Tequicistlan, Juchitan, etc. ;* and Diaz, in his account of Rangre's expedition, writes : " They set out to subdue the provinces of Cematan and Tulapan in the south." Unfortunately the narrative stops at Cematan, and we have to be satisfied with the bare mention of Tulapan, which is, however, sufficient for our purpose.

Taking the palace as a starting-point, it may be said that the city is built in the form of an amphitheatre, on the lowest slopes of the lofty Cordillera beyond ; its high position afforded a magnificent view over the forest-covered plain below stretching as far as the sea. Some travellers have fancied they saw the sea from the summits of the temples, but it is more likely to have been Catasaja lagoon, some ten leagues to the north, for it is doubtful if at this height (650 feet), the ocean is visible even on the clearest day. We find ourselves on the pyramid, we are in the palace, and my impressions, as a mature man, are very different to what they were seven-and-twenty years ago, when my appreciation of the structure was very indifferent, while now my admiration for this massive palace, these ruined temples, these pyramids, is profound, nay, almost overpowering. In all these structures, the builder levelled out the ground in narrow terraces, on which artificial elevations of pyramidal form were reared, which on the hillside were faced with hewn stones, and divided into storeys, as we have seen at Teotihuacan. I notice many changes since I was here before ; portions of walls, the whole front of the Temple of the Cross (No. 1) have given

* Ant. Tello, " Hist. de la Nueva Galicia." " Coleccion Icazbalceta," tome II. Mexico, 1866.

way, and in the Lion's Temple the fine bas-relief over the altar has disappeared. It is sad to calculate how much more havoc another fifty years will make ; there will be nothing, probably, but a mass of mouldering ruins, such as are met with in the woods, on the low hills, and the plain around.

Whilst our men are clearing the palace, we penetrate the thick forest through which some of our Indians open out a passage. We recognise the buildings that have been described, but throughout our progress we see nothing but heaps of unformed ruins. We take up our quarters in the palace itself ; our kitchen and dining-room are in



OUR KITCHEN AT PALENQUE, IN ONE OF THE CORRIDORS.

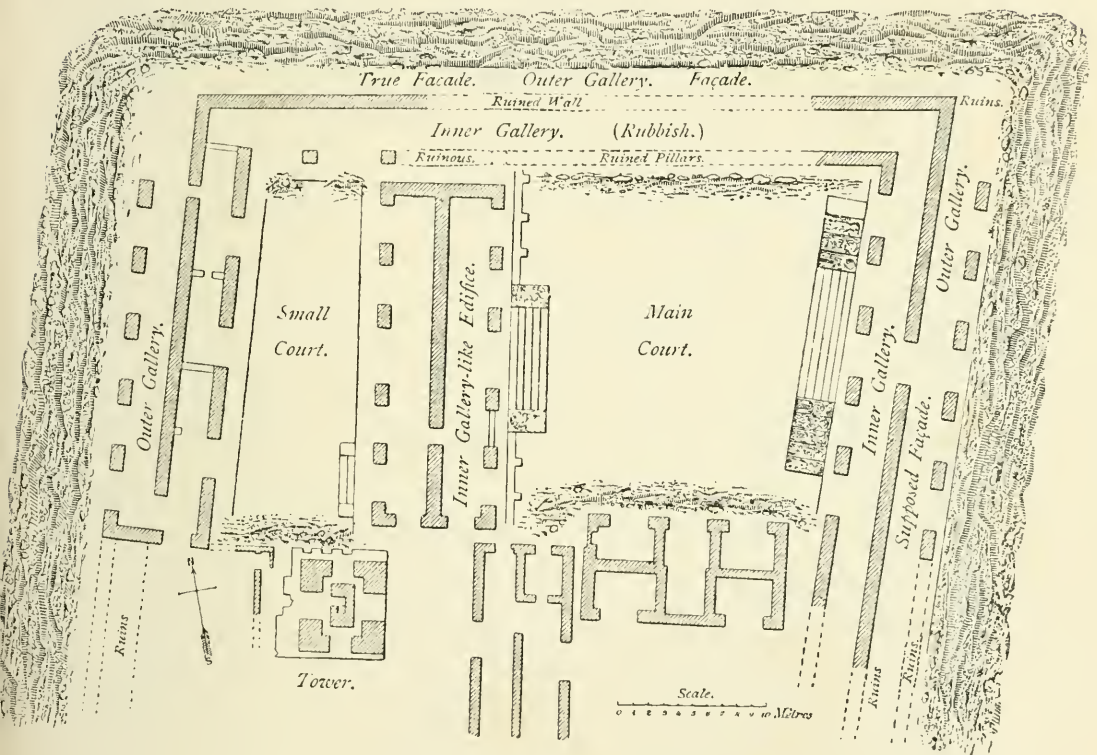
the outward gallery of the eastern entrance, whilst our sleeping apartments are in the eastern gallery of the inner wing. From our dining-room we look out on the forest, and our bedrooms open on the courtyard of the palace. Although Indians as a rule are apathetic, they are brisk and energetic enough

with the *machete*, with which they open out a path so rapidly that one can walk after them a normal pace without stopping, and they fell enormous trees as easily as Europeans would shrubs.

We will begin with the palace, giving the plan of the north portion of the corridors and the tower; we can vouch for the accuracy of our plan, although it differs entirely from those which have been hitherto published.

The palace consisted of two distinct parts (this has not been understood by any of my predecessors, not even Waldeck); a double gallery ran along the east, north, and west sides, surrounding an inner structure, likewise with a double gallery and two courtyards of different dimensions; it was a kind of covered walk or cloister quite separate from the remaining edifice, which to the south must have constituted the dwelling proper. The entire pile of building was reared on the same platform, forming an irregular quadrilateral, and if we except the galleries, nothing seems to have been constructed systematically or on a given plan: the various parts are of different dimensions or different heights, and the courts enclosed within the galleries form trapezes instead of rectangles, one measuring 6 feet 7 inches more to the north than to the south, so that the structures are not parallel. To the south, which it is agreed to consider as forming the dwelling apartments, this confusion is more apparent and complete, for here they seem to have dispensed with any plan at all; buildings large and small reared on different levels are found, in juxtaposition, or at some distance from each other; the roof is sloping or perpendicular, the decorations copious or scanty according to the whim of the artist; some of the apartments, as compared to others, are underground and entered by gloomy steps which receive a dim light from the south side of the pyramid, here only a few feet from the ground.

In these subterraneous apartments are three large stone tables with sculptured edges; they are called altars, beds, sacrificial and dining tables, by different writers, the latter appellation seems the most probable. The independent position of the cloister is very clear in our cut; the left pillar is seen supporting the extremity of the frieze and the end of the roof, which terminated here as it did on the west side.

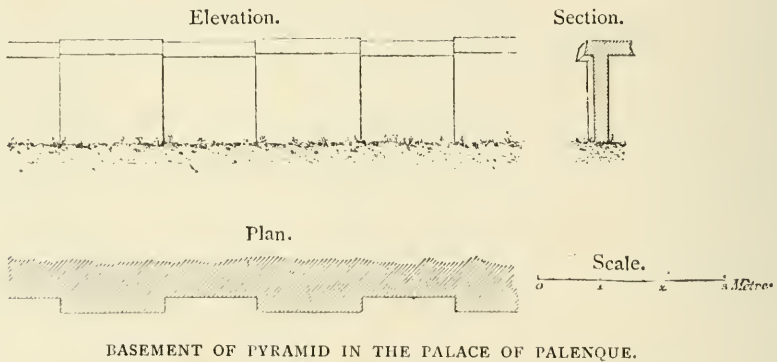


PLAN OF PALACE AT PALENQUE (NORTH SIDE).

All travellers before us have surrounded the entire palace with this gallery, as they have surrounded the great pyramid on which the palace stands with a continuous stairway, but quite erroneously, as is clearly shown in our photograph, which cannot be wrong, and which presents a perpendicular wall throughout its length. The pyramid was divided on the east, north, and west sides,

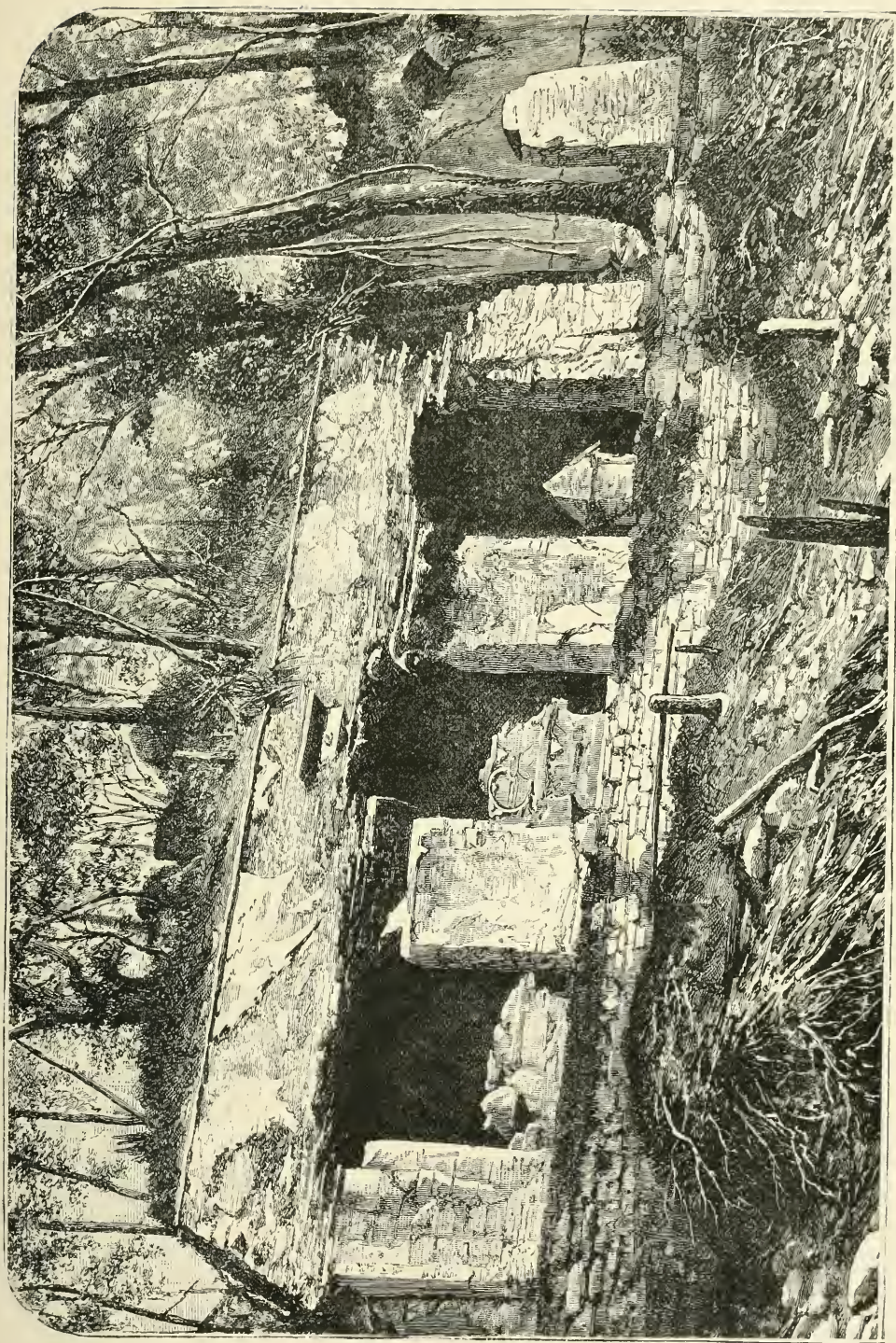
which were higher, into three or four platforms of which we found traces in the north portion.

We have mentioned in a former chapter that similar sections or platforms are found in all the pyramids of a certain height discovered by us at Palenque, which, according to tradition, had their prototypes in the Uplands ; and this is particularly noticeable on the north side of the pyramid, where the palace façade is completely destroyed. Here, and not on the east side, as some have supposed, was the entrance, sufficiently proved by the wealth of ornamentation displayed on this portion of the pyramid, and



BASEMENT OF PYRAMID IN THE PALACE OF PALENQUE.

not observable anywhere else. The base was incrustated with fine slabs some 4 feet 8 inches high, with intervening pillars in relief some 6 feet apart, topped by a cornice of some 6 inches. Above this stood the wall of the second platform, indicated by traces of a stairway which occupied the centre and led to the gallery. This pyramid was the basement on which the palace was reared ; it is irregular on all its sides, contrary to the drawings of some explorers, who have given it a symmetrical shape and equal elevation. It is not easy to see how the mistake could arise, for its irregularity is very apparent. The highest elevation is found on the north side, measuring over 22 feet ; the east and west sides slope down, ending at the south-east angle with a perpen-



THE PALACE, OUTER FAÇADE, PALENQUE.

dicular corner of 6 feet 6 inches; whilst at the south-west corner they are level with the ground. It is the arrangement of all pyramids which were raised on platforms imperfectly levelled out; they are always found higher on the north side facing the plain, than on the south side towards the sierra. This was observable in the pyramids supporting the four buildings to the north of the palace, in the Temple of Inscriptions, the Temple of the Cross No. 1, that of the Cross No. 2, and in the mound known as Cerro Alto, over 487 feet high on the north side, and nearly on a level with the crest of the low hills to the south, and many more.

At the south-east angle of the great pyramid, is a covered canal which drained a mountain stream from the south, but has been long since blocked up, whilst the torrent has found a natural bed some 75 feet from the pyramid, and falls back into the canal 162 feet beyond. Our cut of the outer façade of the east gallery will enable the reader to see the mistake pointed out by us; it shows clearly the extremity of the gallery, and its outline at the angle of the frieze to the south. This outline, while restoring the projecting cornice now wanting, faithfully reproduces the outline of the Toltec calli, given in our chapter on Tula. The west front, as seen in the plan and subsequent photographs, has exactly the same arrangement, so that doubt is impossible. The same writers have given a flight of steps to the eastern façade, while in our drawing a perpendicular wall replaces it, and agreeably to what has been stated, we place the stairs on the north side, where traces were found by us. That this is its proper place is made probable by four beautiful buildings situated on this side some 487 feet beyond, on the same platform, and apparently part of the same pile of building. This side of the gallery was supported by six pillars 6 feet 7 inches wide, by 12 feet high; the corner pillar is decorated with forty katunes in fairly good preservation; the others with bas-reliefs of two or three figures and inscriptions

in stucco or hard plaster, partly destroyed. Stephens reproduced the one on the fifth pillar to the right, which stands alone, the building it supported having fallen. It was then in good preservation, though now much defaced ; from Stephens' drawing, however, it would be difficult to form an idea of the high degree of perfection of these reliefs.

By a lucky chance, we were able to bring to light one of the figures, as perfect and as fresh as on the day it left the artist's



SCULPTURED FIGURE ON PILLAR.

hands, and from it we are able to find out the way the artist did his work. In our cut this relic is on the centre pillar, which was entirely covered with a thick calcareous coating, caused by water trickling from the cornice ; under this coating the faint outline of three figures was just perceptible. My first attempt to uncover the standing figure was not successful, for the hammer brought both the layer of lime and part of the head of the figure with it. I was more cautious in attacking the sitting figure to the left, and fortunate enough to bring it to light without breaking so much as a

bead round his neck, a charming specimen of an art which was not even suspected. It represents a man seated Turkish fashion, his head turned in a contemplative attitude towards the standing figure to the centre of the pillar, the forefinger of the left hand pointing to him, while the right rests on his knee ; his head-dress is a kind of mitre with a tuft of feathers in strong relief, a head-dress we shall meet again at Lorillard ; a beautiful collar is round his neck, his cape like that worn by ladies at the present day, bracelets are round his arms, his dress below

the girdle is like the cape. I immediately had a drawing taken of this *chef-d'œuvre*; but, having inadvertently broken some beads and the spangles round his arm, I was surprised to find it perfectly modelled underneath. I undressed the figure, which was throughout beautifully finished. From this it was clear that the artist modelled first his figures, and that drapery and ornaments were added afterwards, which we found was also the case for the ornamentation on the monuments, as well as for the Toltec idols, the Tlalocs of our cemetery, and some figures at Teotihuacan.

The inside of the gallery where we had our drawing-room and kitchen was decorated with medallions, personating, in all probability, priests and priestesses; our cut is of the only one in pretty good pre-



MEDALLION IN PASSAGE OF EAST WING OF THE PALACE.

servation. To judge from the head-dress and delicate features, it portrays a woman of the same type as our sitting figure; it is a Palenque, a conventional, a deformed type, of which we shall speak again. The medallion is topped by four hieroglyphics, "Katunes," giving the name of the person, surrounded by curious but elegant ornaments, recalling the rococo style of Louis XV.; while to the right is seen the outline of a head deficient of its head-dress. This medallion, although somewhat defaced, shows as careful modelling as the sitting figure, and seems to us very remarkable.

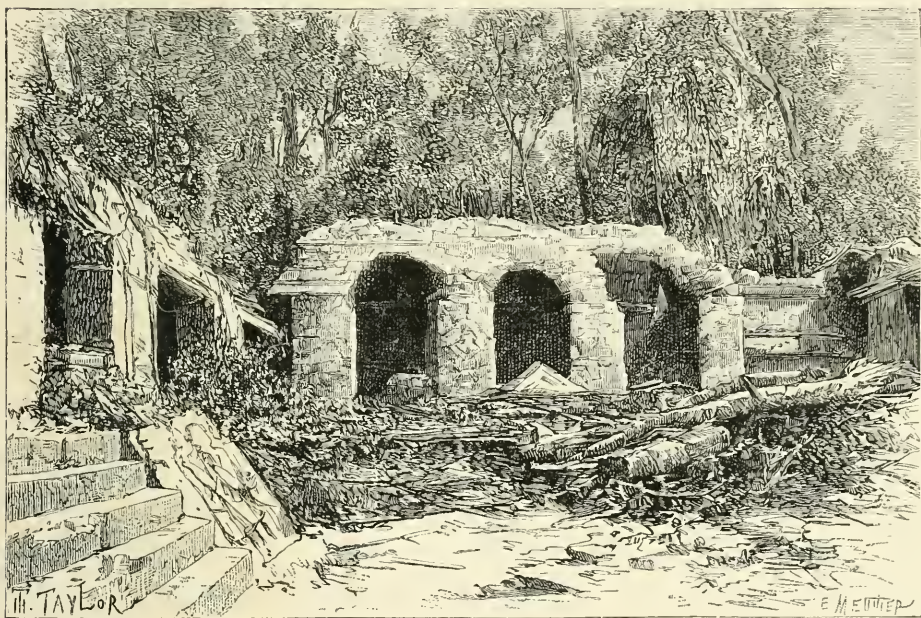
The east gallery measures 114 feet in length; the north gallery, which is broken down, 185 feet; the west gallery 102 feet only; and the intervening space between the two northern galleries, about 175 feet; consequently there is a difference of 11 feet in the length of the north and south



HUGE BAS-RELIEFS IN THE PALACE COURT, PALENQUE.

galleries, proving once more the confusion mentioned above. The main court is reached by an arch widening at the top, shaped like a trefoil, giving access to a broad staircase of seven steps 16 inches high. On each side are sculptured, in low relief, a group of human figures, occupying the basement of the gallery formed by huge stone slabs inclined at the same angle as the

stairs, five to the right, four to the left, representing priests in uncomfortable attitudes. Mitres cover their heads; collars, bracelets, and maxtlis are their only covering; the maxtli of the first figure is covered with hieroglyphs. The court measures upwards of 61 feet to the north and east, only 55 feet to the south, and 71 feet to the west; in fact, as irregular as can be well imagined. To the south of this court is a small structure



SMALL BUILDING TO THE SOUTH OF THE PALACE COURT.

with three openings, giving some idea of what the dwellings were like, and the curious medley of these edifices.

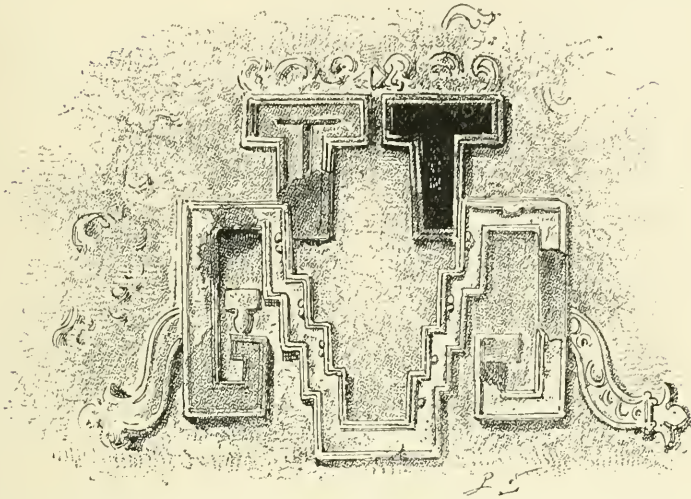
In effect, we find one sunk about the gallery to the right, with a lower building to the left, and a frieze or perpendicular entablature topped by a flat roof, whilst both roof and entablature slope on the small edifice. In this portion of the palace Stephens found some wooden fragments, of very rare occurrence at Palenque, on account of its damp climate; while at Comalcalco, which is older and damper still, none have been found.

The dilapidated condition of the small edifice robs it of some of its interest ; yet the interior and the frieze furnish valuable details of ornamentation. First comes a decorative fragment round the niches or openings in the shape of a Tau, found both in the galleries and the apartments of the palace ; next a portion of a frieze decoration in the same building, but so defaced that nothing is distinguishable, save the head of a fantastic dragon, whose neck is framed with coils, palms, or feathers, emblems of Quetzalcoatl ; and lastly the ornamentation over the entrance of a round, flat-topped edifice, by far the most interesting because of the head seen in the centre with nose and forehead straight, contrasting with the retreating foreheads of the reliefs on both pillars and temples ; proving that the latter are conventional types, exaggerated likenesses of a particular family, whether warrior or priest, rather than the faithful portraiture of a race. We shall also find this type at Uxmal.

Torquemada says with regard to these deformations in Mexico : "They defaced their faces so as to acquire an appearance of ferocity, enlarging their ears, nostrils, and lips by introducing silver, gold, or stone jewels. It had the twofold use of acting as a scare against their enemies and as a personal improvement ; and that they might look fierce in war, chiefs were obliged in some districts to make their heads long and their foreheads broad ; as Hippocrates relates of microcephales, so did these people practise."* And again : "Some have pointed heads, square flat foreheads, whilst others are like the Mexicans and Peruvians, who had and still have heads something like a *martillo*, hammer, or better still, like a ship (*navio*)," meaning oblong, probably.†

Landa tells nearly the same thing as to these practices in

* Torquemada, "Monarquía Indiana," lib. xiv. cap. xxiv. † *Ibid.* cap. xxv.



FRAGMENT OF DECORATION SHAPED LIKE A TAU, SURROUNDING NICHES IN THE CORRIDORS AND APARTMENTS OF THE PALACE.



FRIEZE DECORATION OF BUILDING SOUTH OF THE COURT.



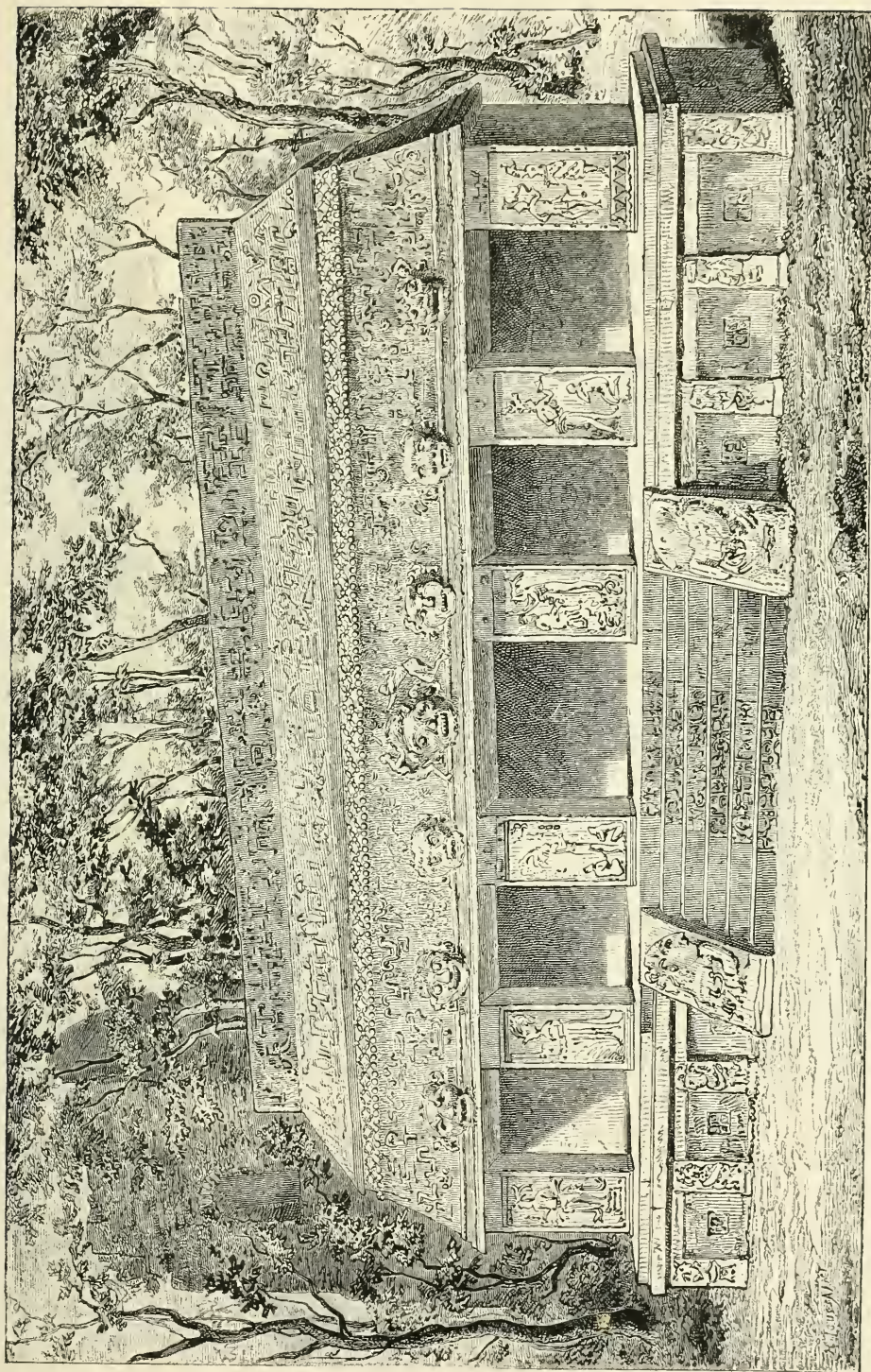
FRAGMENT OF DECORATION OVER A DOOR.

Yucatan, corroborating Torquemada. These defaced heads have given rise to wild theories; some saw in these reliefs sun-

kings who, in mythical times, had travelled thither from Europe ; it had been more natural to take them as representations of microcephales worshipped by these people as monstrosities.

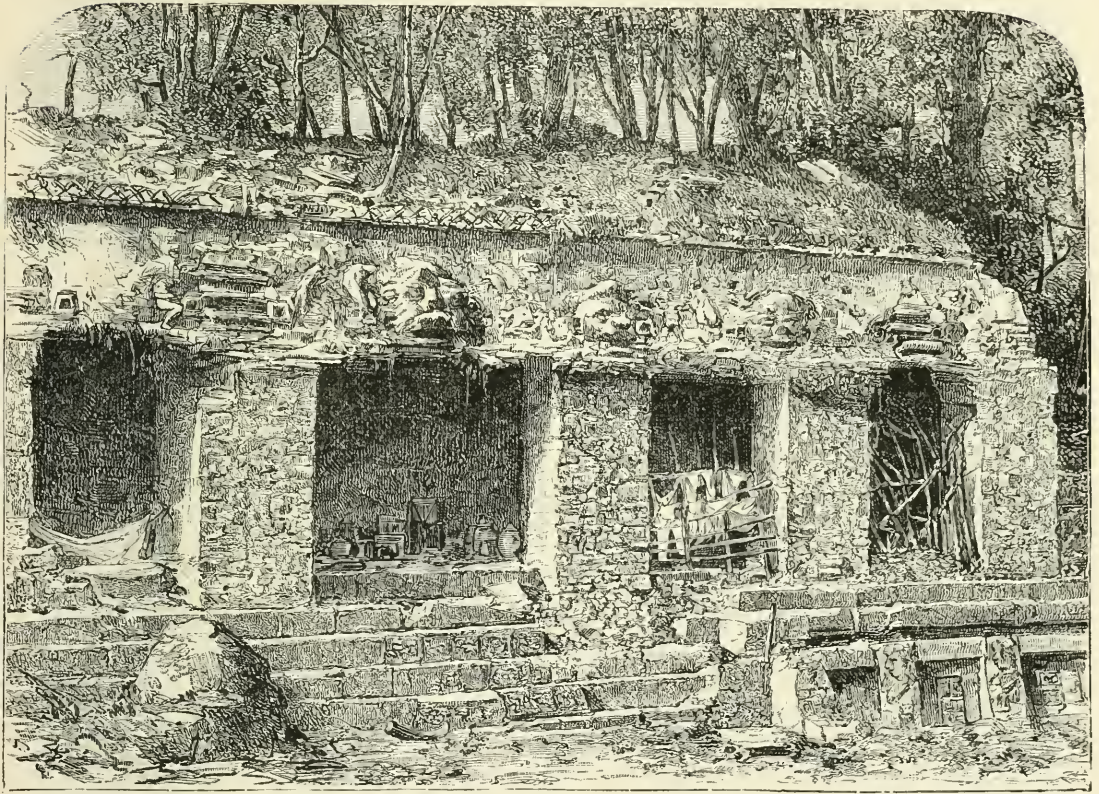
But to return. The east front in the inner wing of the palace is nearly intact—the richest in ornamentation, and the portion of the palace where the peculiarities of this architecture are best studied. The structure intervening between the two courts consists of two roofed galleries, supported on each side by six pillars, enclosing five large arches. The entrance is through the central arch, which is somewhat larger than the others, and is preceded by a flight of steps having hieroglyphics in relief ; on each side of it were two large decorative figures, one of which is still standing. The base, which is remarkable, has three small platforms, sustained by sculptured pillars divided by large retreating slabs, with small squares of hieroglyphics. The pillars were covered on the outer and lateral sides with reliefs in cement, vestiges of which are still discernible. The lintels over the doorways of the gallery have disappeared ; they were of red zapote wood, and their impress is unmistakable. These ornamental woods cannot all have long been demolished ; for in Palenque, Mr. Kohler showed me a yard-measure and a stick he had had made out of a lintel found among the ruins.

These facts, taken altogether, seem to indicate that the buildings at Palenque are not so old as is supposed. The roof in the upper portion of the palace slopes gently, and the entablature is so marvellously rich, that I found fresh details every time I visited it. The frieze was decorated with seven enormous heads ; the last one to the right has still visible the mouth, nose, and eyebrows. These heads were obtained by means of slabs enclosed in the wall as stays to the cement, which was modelled by the sculptor whilst in this soft state. The central figure over the door of the gallery is the largest ; each seems



RESTORATION OF INNER WING OF THE PALACE.

to have had on either side statues life-size in high relief, and traces of them occur throughout. Sometimes it is the distinct outline of the fallen relief, sometimes it is a leg, sometimes part of a torso. Near the central figure to the left, we traced the entire lower portion of one of the figures, which brings to



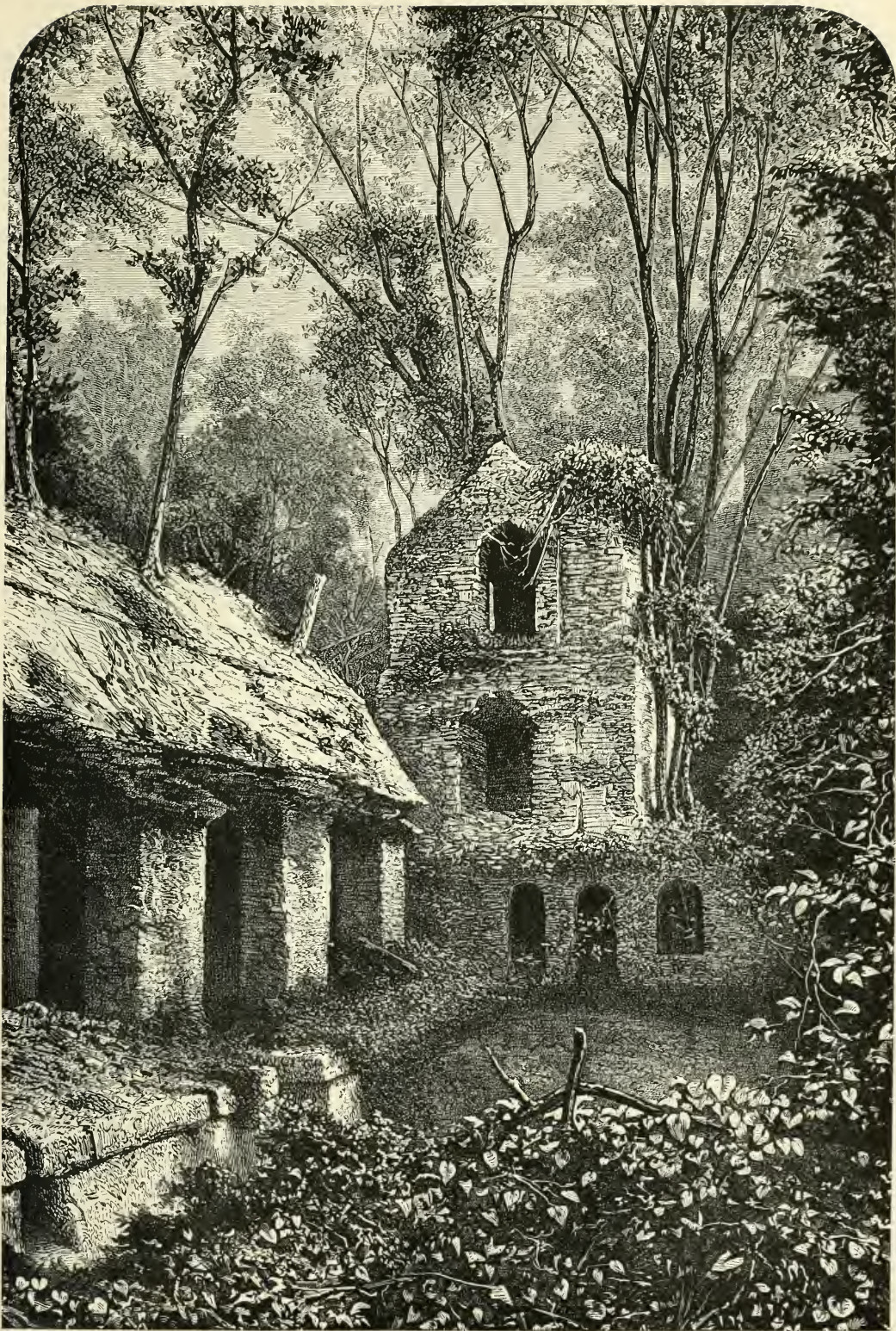
EASTERN FAÇADE OF INNER WING OF THE PALACE, PALENQUE.

our mind the fragment we found at Comalcalco (*vide* chap. Comalcalco). If this frieze were crowned by a light cornice, with stucco ornaments lozenge-shaped, if the roof were likewise enriched with sculpture and reliefs, some idea would be had of this magnificent and noble edifice. Besides a photograph, we

give the restoration of the palace, as near the truth as could be obtained with the aid of a plan and details drawn upon the spot.

The gallery inside was decorated with fantastic, terrible, monstrous figures of Indian deities. Our cut shows the best preserved, if we except the relief, which recalls the masks on the frieze. It may also be observed that the north end is a plain wall, which was separated from the fallen gallery by a narrow passage, while to the south the double gallery ended with two apertures leading to the yard where stands the palace tower. The gallery opposite to this is connected with the west gallery by a narrow doorway, the interior of which is quite plain; if medallions were here, no trace is left of them on the polished stucco walls. This gallery opens on a small courtyard, blocked up by the west wing of the palace to the west, by the main gallery to the north, and by the tower to the south. This courtyard is likewise irregular and much narrower than the other, measuring 19 feet 6 inches to the north, and 22 feet to the south. The basement of the gallery in this court is as rich as in the main gallery; sculptured pillars are distributed at a distance of 6 feet, divided by beautiful flags with katunes, which fit admirably.

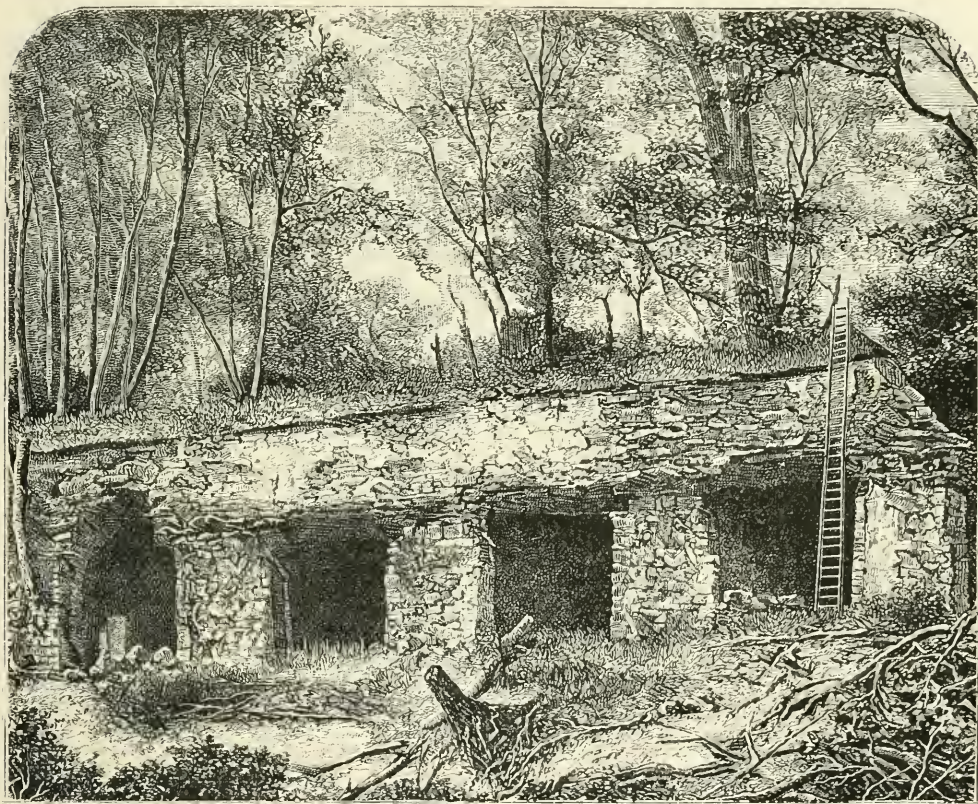
The tower is not the least curiosity in this wonderful palace; trees grow over and about it, whose roots surround the walls like iron circles; unfortunately every explorer, whether to draw or photograph it, has had the roots of the trees removed, and this will greatly accelerate its complete downfall. It is a square tower, which rose by three storeys over a ground floor, ornamented to the north with pointed niches; the top storey has disappeared, and the great trees to the right bend over, ominously threatening it with utter destruction. It is not unlike the Coniacalco tower; but the decorations were in all probability less rich, for beyond



TOWER IN THE PALACE.

some stucco coatings still facing some portions, I saw nothing in the remains which could compare with the great decorative subjects of that city.

The west wing of the palace is the best preserved, but unlike the other two, it has no longer a double gallery. The interior

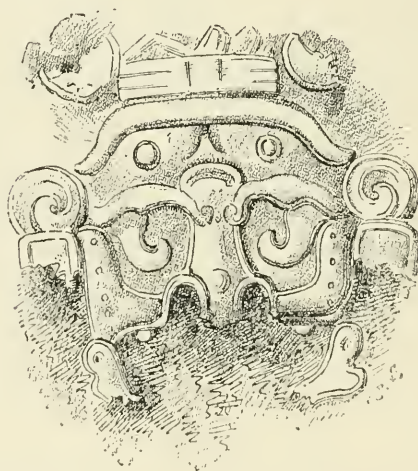


THE PALACE, WESTERN FAÇADE.

has three long, narrow apartments which open on the courtyard, and communicate with the exterior by two doorways at each end. The outer gallery is also the best preserved; the façade is entire, except the centre of the north-west angle, while all the pillars still bear traces of the beautiful reliefs with which they were once ornamented.

The south end of this gallery shows clearly that the monu-

ment ended here, and that the cloisters, as we have named them, constituted a separate pile, which was divided from the group of dwellings. Opposite to this, some 325 feet distant to the west, rose another pyramid crowned with a temple, of which nothing but mouldering ruins remain.



MEDALLION IN PASSAGE OF INNER WING.



TEMPLE OF INSCRIPTIONS, PALENQUE.

CHAPTER XIV.

PALENQUE. TEMPLES.

Palenque a Holy City—Bas-reliefs—Rain and Fever—A Grateful Cook—Temple of Inscriptions—Temple of the Sun—Temple of the Cross No. 1—Temple of the Cross No. 2—Altars—Mouldings and Photographs—Fire—Explorations—Fallen Houses—The Age of Trees in Connection with the Ruins—Recapitulation.

SOME writers have called Palenque a capital, and the great edifice known as the palace a royal mansion, but they have erred, for if there was a royal palace it was not the one we have described. Like Teotihuacan, Izamal, and Cozumel, Palenque was a holy place, an important religious centre, a city which was resorted

to as a place of pilgrimage, teeming with shrines and temples, a vast and much-sought burial-place. In this and in no other way can be explained the silence surrounding this great city, which was probably peopled by a floating population dispersed at the first alarm of the Conquest.

This important city is apparently without civic architecture ; no public buildings are found, there seems to have been nothing but temples and tombs. Consequently the great edifice was not a royal palace, but rather a priestly habitation, a magnificent convent occupied by the higher clergy of this holy centre, as the reliefs everywhere attest.

Had Palenque been the capital of an empire, the palace a kingly mansion, the history of her people, fragments of domestic life, pageants, recitals of battles and conquests, would be found among the reliefs which everywhere cover her edifices, as in Mexico, at Chichen-Itza and other cities in Yucatan ; whereas the reliefs in Palenque show nothing of the kind. On them we behold peaceful, stately subjects, usually a personage standing with a sceptre, sometimes a calm, majestic figure whose mouth emits a flame, emblem of speech and oratory. They are surrounded by prostrated acolytes, whose bearing is neither that of slaves nor of captives ; for the expression of their countenance, if submissive, is open and serene, and their peaceful attitude indicates worshippers and believers ; no arms are found among these multitudes, nor spear, nor shield, nor bow, nor arrow, nothing but preachers and devotees.

The interest attaching to these studies is certainly profound and sincere, yet it does not entirely banish the consciousness of our very arduous life among these ruins. The rain is incessant ; the damp seems to penetrate the very marrow of our bones ; a vegetable mould settles on our hats which we are obliged to brush off daily ; we live in mud, we are covered with mud, we

breathe in mud, whether amongst the ruins or wandering away from them; the ground is so slippery that we are as often on our backs as on our feet.

No rest for the explorer, is the fiat that has gone forth. At night the walls, which are covered with greenish moss, trickle down on our weary heads and awake us out of our sleep; in the day-time we are a prey to swarms of insects, rodadores, mosquitoes, and garrapatas. It is impossible to bear up long against such odds, and first young Lemaire, next Alfonso the cook, are laid up with malaria. Julian and I are the only two of the party whom this scourge has spared. Yet this wretched life is not without some gleams of sunshine. Since our men opened a large space in front of the palace, and cleared the courtyard of the dense vegetation which blocked it up completely, allowing a free passage for the air to circulate, the birds have not been slow to avail themselves of this new retreat, and our mornings and evenings are cheered by their sweet notes. We have our night concerts also, when innumerable creatures, whose names we know not, mingle their voices with the chirping of the cricket, the song of the cicala, the croaking of frogs, followed by the howling of huge monkeys, which sounds like the roaring of lions and tigers; all this is new to us, and not without a certain amount of excitement, yet it sinks into utter insignificance as compared with the great joy of our discoveries, the ever fresh interest of our photographs, the looking forward with immense satisfaction to the time when we shall produce the splendid squeezes of these grand, mysterious inscriptions, not yet found in any museum. Well weighed together, these things are calculated to make us forget the hardships and troubles of the moment.

Quinine has done wonders; our men are themselves again, and Alfonso, to make us forget the meagre fare he inflicted

upon us during his illness, served up a magnificent luncheon to celebrate his recovery. The reader may like to read the menu of a *déjeuner* in the wilds of America:—

Soupe : Purée de haricots noirs au bouillon d'escargots. Olives de Valence, saucisson d'Arles. Poulet de grain, sauté à l'ail et au piment rouge. Morue frite. Chives, pointes de petits palmiers en branches d'asperge. Fritures : haricots noirs rissolés. Crêpes. Fromage américain. Vins : Bordeaux et Aragon. Café, habanero et cigares de Tabasco.

I am not sure about the order of succession, but I can vouch for the items being correct, from which it may be seen that even at Palenque, with fine weather and a grateful cook, one need not starve, but he would be greatly mistaken who thought that this was our every day's fare. Let us return to graver concerns.

The Temple of Inscriptions is the largest known at Palenque, standing on a pyramid of some 48 feet high, to the south-west angle of the palace ; its façade, 74 feet by nearly 25 deep, is composed of a vast gallery occupying the whole front, and of three compartments of different sizes, a large central chamber and two small ones at the sides. The front gallery is pierced with five apertures, supported by six pillars of 6 feet 9 inches by 3 feet 7 inches thick. The two corner pillars were covered with katunes, and the other four with bas-reliefs. No sanctuary is found in the building known as the Temple of Inscriptions, but both the gallery and the central room have flagstones covered with inscriptions. Two panels enclosed in the wall of the gallery measure 13 feet wide by 7 feet 8 inches high, one in the central chamber is over 7 feet by 6 feet. Amidst the katunes of this panel Waldeck has seen fit to place three or four elephants. What end did he propose to himself in giving this fictitious representation ? Presumably to give a prehistoric origin to these ruins, since it is an ascertained fact that elephants in a fossil state

only have been found on the American continent. It is needless to add that neither Catherwood, who drew these inscriptions most minutely, nor myself who brought impressions of them away, nor living man, ever saw these elephants and their fine trunks.

But such is the mischief engendered by preconceived opinions. With some writers it would seem that to give a recent date to these monuments would deprive them of all interest. It would have been fortunate had explorers been imbued with fewer prejudices and gifted with a little more common sense, for then we should have known the truth with regard to these ruins long since. Of all the buildings the temple was the best preserved, as seen in every detail. The floor, which in the palace is but a layer of plaster, is laid down here with beautiful slabs 9 feet 9 inches on one side by 5 feet by 7 inches thick.

The roof is unfortunately in a very ruinous state, and the dense vegetation which covers it prevents seeing anything of the large figures which presumably occupied its surface; even a photograph is difficult to get, for want of sufficient space, and the one we give is not a success.

Three other temples are found on a plateau, some 200 yards south-east of the palace at the foot of Cerro Alto. First in order is a small temple of the Sun, in a perfect state of preservation; the front measures 38 feet by 27 feet deep. The pilasters, the roof, and superstructure, were all covered with sculptures and complicated decorations. Any one who is acquainted with sacred Japanese architecture would be struck with the resemblance of this temple to a Japanese sanctuary; and this is very clearly seen in our cut. How is this to be explained? A theory might be started with respect to the probable Asiatic origin of the Toltec tribes; of the influence of a Japanese civilisation, through the steady traffic they formerly



TEMPLE OF THE SUN, PALENQUE.

carried on, on the coast north-west of America, as also by fortuitous immigrations resulting from shipwrecks. In the present day, the average of Japanese vessels shipwrecked on

the Californian coast is only two a year. However it may be, we will for the present leave to others the task of elucidating the question of origin.

The interior of the temple is a large room, receiving its light through three apertures in the façade ; the end is occupied by a sanctuary, and each side by a small dark room. The sanctuary is a kind of oblong tabernacle, crowned with a richly decorated frieze and stuccoed mouldings. Two pilasters supported the roof, and formerly were covered with inscriptions or sculptured slabs representing various subjects ; these flags have been broken or taken away, and not one remains *in loco*.



JAPANESE TEMPLE.

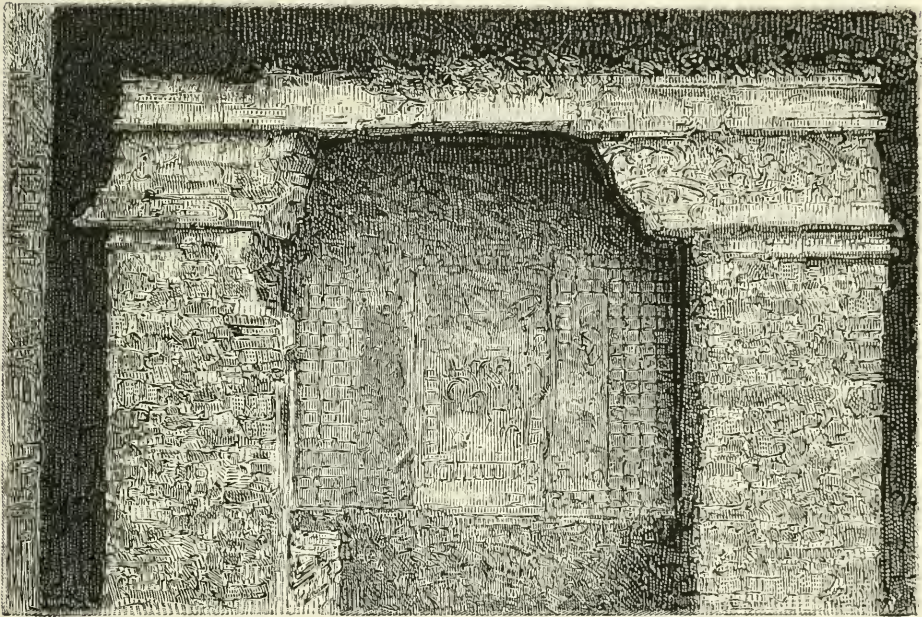
Those which were in the Temple of the Cross No. 1, have already been described and a drawing given. The end of the sanctuary is occupied by three slabs in juxtaposition, with sculptures of a religious character ; in the central portion or tablet is a hideous face, with protruding tongue, identical with

that found on the Aztec calendar in Mexico, known as the Tablet of the Sun. This symbolical figure is found also at Tikal carved in wood.

In our cut of the Temple of the Cross No. 2, three distinct subjects are seen: in the central slab is a cross, branching out with palms supporting two figures; the body of the cross, which rests on a hideous head, is sculptured in the centre, and at the upper end are two human figures, crowned by a symbolic bird having a long tail and eagle claws. The left slab represents a man richly habited, with collar, medallion, girdle, and greaves; the right slab a woman, to judge from her size, long plait of hair, and peculiar clothing. This female is borne on palms having the very well-preserved outline of human heads. Both the male and female seem to stand before the symbolic bird offering presents, the nature of which it is not easy to specify. To the rear of each device is an inscription of sixty-eight characters, doubtless explanatory of the ceremony the whole sculpture represents, but which no one has yet been able to read.

We are of opinion that the Temple of the Cross No. 1 was a sanctuary consecrated to Tlaloc and Quetzalcoatl, and that the altar in the same Temple No. 2 was dedicated to Tlaloc; our only ground for this belief, however, is the cross, which we know was a later symbolic personification of the god of rain; but we will leave this question until we come to Lorillard, where monuments of the same kind, and the authority of ancient writers, will furnish data to strengthen our theory. It may not be irrelevant to add that neither temples nor palaces were provided with doors, and that stuff or matting curtains were used for all apertures, indicated by the large and small rings fixed on the pilasters on each side of the entrances, and the whole length of the inner cornice. We know that neither the Toltecs nor Aztecs had doors to their houses, which seems to show great respect for property, or as Clavigero

puts it, "the severity of the laws was a powerful preservative." What he says of Mexico is equally applicable to Palenque : " Houses had no doors, for they deemed that dwellings were sufficiently guarded by the stringency of the laws ; and the people, not to be overlooked by their neighbours, had curtains to all the openings, while resounding pottery, or some other rattling object, was suspended over the entrance to warn the inmates whenever a



SCULPTURED SLABS OF SANCTUARY, IN THE TEMPLES OF PALENQUE.

stranger raised the curtain to pass into the house. No one was allowed admittance who had not the owner's full permission to do so, unless the degree of relationship or necessity justified the liberty." *

Notwithstanding the deplorable circumstances in which I had to work, I was able to take more than 325 square feet of impressions ; and here I take much pleasure in recording the

* Clavigero, "Hist. Antig. de Mejico y de su Conquista," tome i. lib. vii. p. 245.

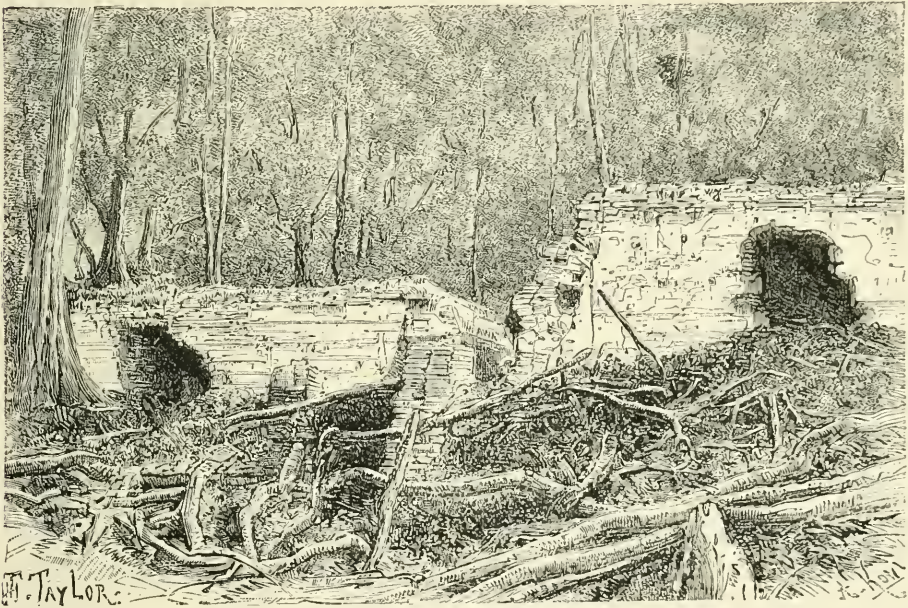
debt of gratitude I owe Mr. de Laval for his admirable invention, which by means of paper instead of plaster makes the taking of impressions in distant countries comparatively easy, when the difficulty of transport and the expense of plaster would, in our case, have placed the reproduction of reliefs and inscriptions entirely beyond our power. As it was, my impressions, which, had I used plaster, would have weighed at least 30,000 lb., only weighed 500 lb.; but even so, the taking of impressions is not so easily effected as may be imagined, especially in a damp region where the utmost care was required to reproduce faithfully the delicate, faint, and defaced reliefs on these old slabs. It would be impossible to give an idea of the immense and minute brush-work which was required to cover 325 feet square of paper six sheets deep.

Furthermore, the reliefs were only reached by a shaky scaffolding of wet twigs; next came the drying process round huge fires to secure the moulds against the rain getting into them, and the stowing them speedily away before they got spoiled. Well, but we had every reason to be satisfied with our work; the precious squeezes had been satisfactorily stored up in the galleries of the palace, when, on the night of January 26th, a night I shall never forget, a hideous smell of burning startled us out of our sleep to witness the flames which were consuming my mouldings, the result, too, of three weeks' hard labour, now fast vanishing into smoke. To snatch the burning rolls and throw them into the yard, where the Indians were ready to deluge them with water, was the work of a moment, but, alas! to no purpose; the mischief was irretrievable, and we had to begin all over again. Whether done by accident or of malice prepense, it was idle to inquire; we set to work again with renewed ardour, and after ten days of incessant labour we brought out copies finer than the first, and these are now to be found in the Trocadéro.



SCULPTURED SLABS IN THE TEMPLE OF THE CROSS NO. 2.

Our labours in the palace did not prevent our making explorations on the hill or mountain. We had spied to the north of the palace, some 812 feet distant, a group of four houses, or small palaces, the ruins of which appeared sufficiently interesting to be reproduced, which I did, after having had the southern portion cleared of its luxuriant vegetation, when I found that the whole length of the northern side was occupied by a dead wall, without



RUINS TO THE NORTH OF THE PALACE.

apertures or fronts of any kind, facing the palace and overlooking a deep precipice. These structures, like those we discovered subsequently, were all built on the same plan, but in various sizes and dimensions. The inner vault of the left building, however, is ornamented with round lines forming pretty devices, unlike the others, which are quite plain. The pyramids on which these structures were reared had three stories supported by perpendicular walls. To this group of buildings belonged a small sanctuary or chapel; notwithstanding its dilapidated con-

dition it deserves mention because of some decorative remains, which give a good idea of what must have been its profuse ornamentation.

After our visit to the Lion's Temple, now in a deplorable state of dilapidation, we crossed the high-banked river and reached a high level at the base of Cerro Alto, where we came upon a cluster of buildings composed of diminutive compartments which were used as tombs; two more were found by us in some other buildings to the north of the palace. These small monuments were constructed with uncemented stones, and were in good preservation. The tombs measured 6 feet 7 inches by 1 foot 8 inches to 1 foot 9 inches wide; they occupied the centre of the rooms and were built with flagstones; the bodies were found with two large flat-bottomed vases, ornamented with a little sunk flower, identical with those found at Teotihuacan.

Among the innumerable ruins we discovered were five temples; one, to judge from the height of the pyramid, which was divided into four stories, and its noble remains must have been important. As we descend the river to the north-west, pyramids, ruined buildings, groups of low houses, temples, and palaces, are found occupying the slopes of the Cordilleras, from the crest of the lesser chain to their base. The buildings are found on the high level and temples on eminences, followed by a vast space apparently unoccupied, perhaps the site of ancient gardens. To form an accurate idea of the plan of the city would necessitate the felling of forest over several square miles, an undertaking not to be thought of in our case. Bridges and roads connected the various edifices; some of these roads or streets measure several hundred yards, and I found one bridge of 32 feet square with one single opening, 3 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches deep. All were built with

uncemented stones. Now most bridges have crumbled away, the torrents they spanned are blocked up, and the waters are drained through beds they have hewn for themselves, running over the structures and depositing on their façades stalactites which give them a strange appearance.

The explorer who sees the complete desolation of this ancient city must bear in mind, that in a tropical region excessively hot and damp a long time is not necessary to destroy even structures of solid stone, in order to avoid attributing great antiquity to these ruins. Now the ornamentation, both in the palaces of Palenque, on the upper part of friezes, or the dress of figures, consists of small rolls or round lines of plaster, studded with diminutive spheres or dots, which, as we explained before, were added at the very last, and is clearly seen in our restoration. That ornamentation at once so fragile could not last many hundred years in such surroundings, is proved by the fact that on the least touch round lines and dots come down, and that the ground is strewn with them. If we examine the stairways, which on both sides of the courtyard of the palace connected the two edifices, we shall find the steps unworn, the stairs new; yet communication must have been incessant, and if for long ages thousands of people descended and ascended these stairs, would not the wear and tear be traceable?

The stairs of our public buildings are worn away in no time; if we find them entire at Palenque, it is a proof that they were not long trodden. Nor is this all. The roofs, the walls and courts of the palaces are so well hidden under the thick vegetation which covers them, that a stranger might pass a few yards distant and never suspect their presence. The size of the trees growing between and over these structures has been adduced as a conclusive proof of the age of these

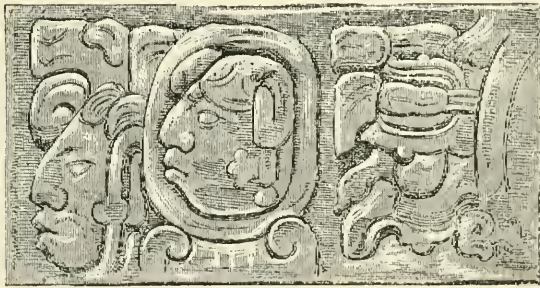
monuments. Waldeck calculated their age at 2,000 years and more; Mr. Lorainzar computed that these monuments must be 1,700 years old, because he found a mahogany table made of one single piece from a tree in these ruins. His reasoning was based on the erroneous notion that a concentric circle represents one year, whereas I ascertained that in a tropical country nature never rests; for chancing to cut a twig some eighteen months old, I counted no less than eighteen concentric circles. To assure myself that this was not an isolated fact, I cut branches and trees of every size and description, when the same phenomenon occurred in exactly the same proportions. More than this: in my first expedition to Palenque in 1859, I had the eastern side of the palace cleared of its dense vegetation to secure a good photograph. Consequently the trees that have grown since cannot be more than twenty-two years old; now one of the cuttings measuring some two feet in diameter, had upwards of 230 concentric circles; that is at the rate of one in a month, or even less; it follows that the seventeen centuries of Mr. Lorainzar must be reduced to 150 or at most 200 years.

Stephens mentions a ceiba twenty-two years old of 6 feet 10 inches in diameter, and I noticed in Mexico some eucalyptus not eighteen years old, measuring 6 feet 9 inches in diameter; could these trees have only eighteen or twenty concentric circles?

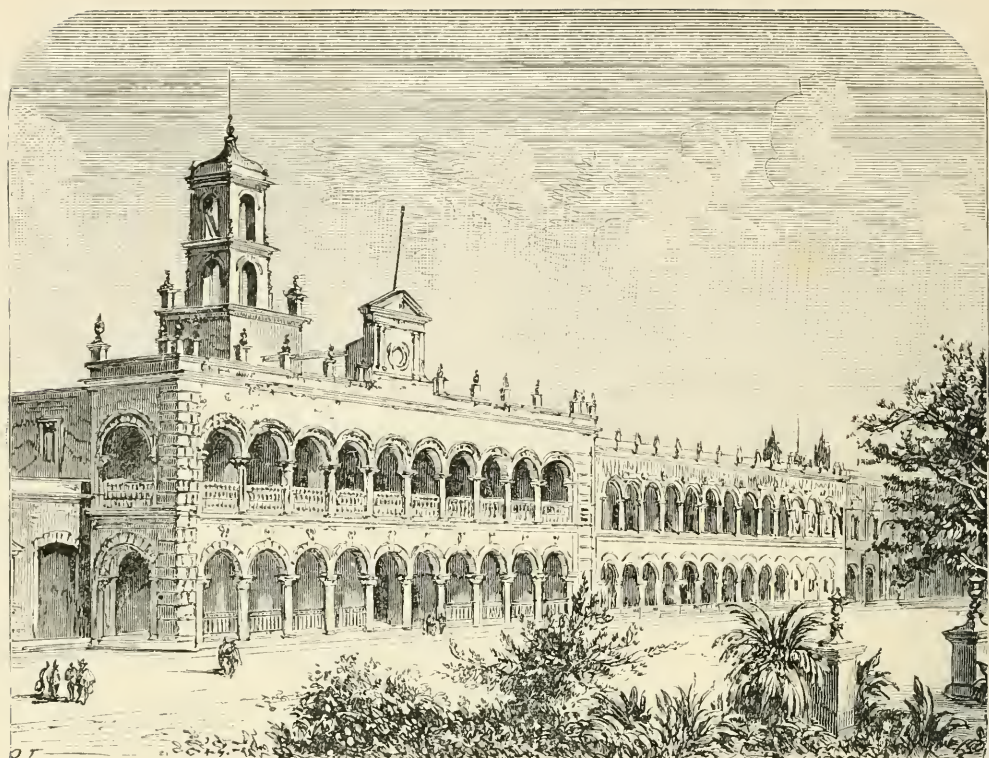
To recapitulate, Palenque seems to us more modern, as she is far better preserved than Comalcalco; if the latter was inhabited at the time of the Conquest (and we think we have proved it), the former must have been likewise. Comalcalco was a Toltec city just as was Palenque, and this is clearly demonstrated in the pyramidal form given to the basement of edifices, in the invariable shape of the monuments, bearing so striking a

resemblance to the Toltec calli, in the fragments, in the masks of terra-cotta, the pottery, and the small figures, facsimiles of those we found on the plateaux ; in the cultus of the cross, emblem of the Toltec Tlaloc, and lastly in the important quotations from Juarros and Diaz, affirming that Palenque was called Tula.

We shall leave for the present this Toltec branch which founded Ocosingo, Colhuacan, and other cities of the Uplands, to visit the other branch which settled in the Yucatan peninsula.



STAIRCASE INSCRIPTIONS.



MUNICIPAL PALACE AND SQUARE, MERIDA.

CHAPTER XV.

YUCATAN, MERIDA, AND THE MAYA RACE.

Early Account of Yucatan—First Explorers : F. Hernandez de Cordova, Juan de Grijalva—Cortez—Railroad—Henequen Estate—Merida—Historical Jottings—Destruction of all the Documents by the Historian Landa—Municipal Palace—Cathedral—The Conqueror's House—Private Houses—Market Place—Maya Race—Types—Manners and Customs of the Mayas—Deformation and Tattooing—Meztizas—Dwellings—Suburbs.

WE will next proceed to the study of the Toltec branch which penetrated the Yucatan peninsula by Patonchan, and from which the reigning family of the Cocomes were descended.

The main harbour on the north-east coast was formerly Sisal,

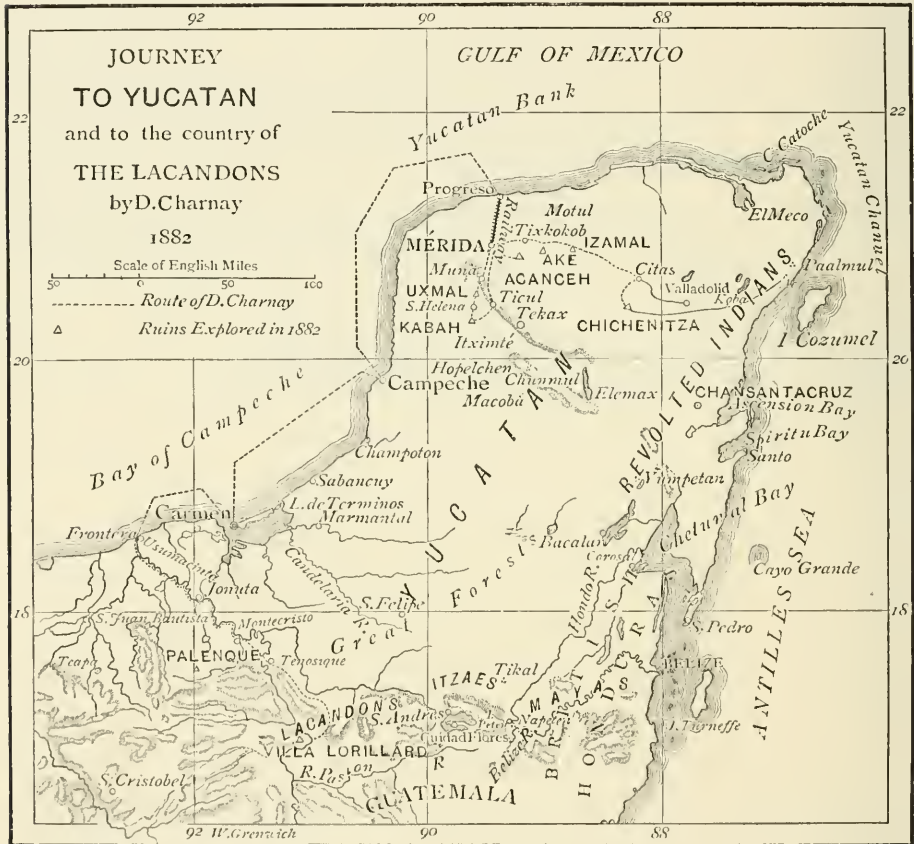
but the requirements of an increasing trade have moved it on to Progreso, where we cast anchor in a gale of wind which obliged us to remain five or six miles outside, to keep clear of the shoals which make this coast dangerous. We land with considerable difficulty at last, and are not sorry to get rid of the unpleasant sensation known as sea-sickness. The peninsula has no rivers and no water, and is of calcareous formation; flat and barren to the north, where the soil is but few inches deep; more hilly and productive towards the centre, because of its older formation; it rises to the south to the Sierra Madre, which runs through Central America.

The direction of Yucatan is from north to south, between the eighth and twelfth degree longitude east of Mexico, and between the eighteenth and twenty-second degree of latitude. The first to mention it is Columbus, who, on July 30th, 1502, finding himself at Pine Island, saw a large barque manned by twenty-four rowers, having a cacique and family on board, dressed in the costume known since as Yucatec; the boat was freighted with cacao, tortillas, and a beverage made of Indian corn, wooden swords with blades of obsidian, copper axes, and cotton tissues as soft as silk, dyed in brilliant hues.

A reasonable doubt may be entertained as to this canoe, said to have measured 8 feet wide, having come from Yucatan, a country by its nature exceedingly dry, arid, stony, and without rivers, circumstances hardly favourable to making sailors of its inhabitants; moreover, copper axes and obsidian blades were scarce among the Mayas, and the Spaniards, under Grijalva, never met them until they reached Tabasco.* It seems, therefore, probable, that the canoe came from Tabasco, a region

* There were fewer in Yucatan, where they were imported.

civilised like Yucatan, intersected by large rivers, clad with an exuberant vegetation, noble cedar and mahogany trees, from which to build capacious boats. As for the dress, it is nearly the same as that worn by the Mayas; but what is even more significant is that cocoa is one of the chief pro-



ductions of Tabasco, and is only known as an importation in Yucatan,* except indeed towards Patonchan, where, at the time of the Conquest, the vegetation was as vigorous, and cacao as extensively cultivated as in Tabasco. The Maya language

* It was only cultivated towards Bacalar lagoon, nearly 100 leagues from the north coast.

was common to both districts. Had Columbus followed the canoe, he would have added to his own the glory Cortez achieved later; at all events he had been the first to discover the central regions of America.

The first to visit Yucatan was Vincente Yanez Pinzon, who with Diaz Solis, in 1505, coasted the eastern side, without, however, identifying it. In 1511, Valdivia was wrecked on the Alacranes reefs on his way to Cuba; he and his crew effected a landing, when the only survivors of the ill-usage of the natives were Gonzalo Guerrero and Geronimo de Aguilar, of whom I shall speak later. In 1517, Cordova sailed along the northern coast, where he observed great cities and high pyramids; he landed at Campeche, and saw stately temples, having serpentine walls in relief, similar to that of the great temple in Mexico, dedicated to Cukulcan (Quetzalcoatl). He landed at Patonchan or Champeton, when the natives massacred fifty-seven of his companions. It would seem strange that Cortez, in all his encounters with the natives of the Uplands, should have had so few casualties, were it not known that they strove to take their enemies alive that they might offer them on the altar of their deities. To this prevailing custom Cortez twice owed his life during the siege of Mexico, but as he was being led away to be sacrificed to their war-god he was both times rescued by his companions.

In Yucatan and Tabasco, where Aztec influence was of recent date, the introduction of human sacrifice comparatively new, the natives killed rather than captured their enemies; and this explains the great losses sustained by the Spaniards in the peninsula, and is another proof of Toltec teachings in these districts.

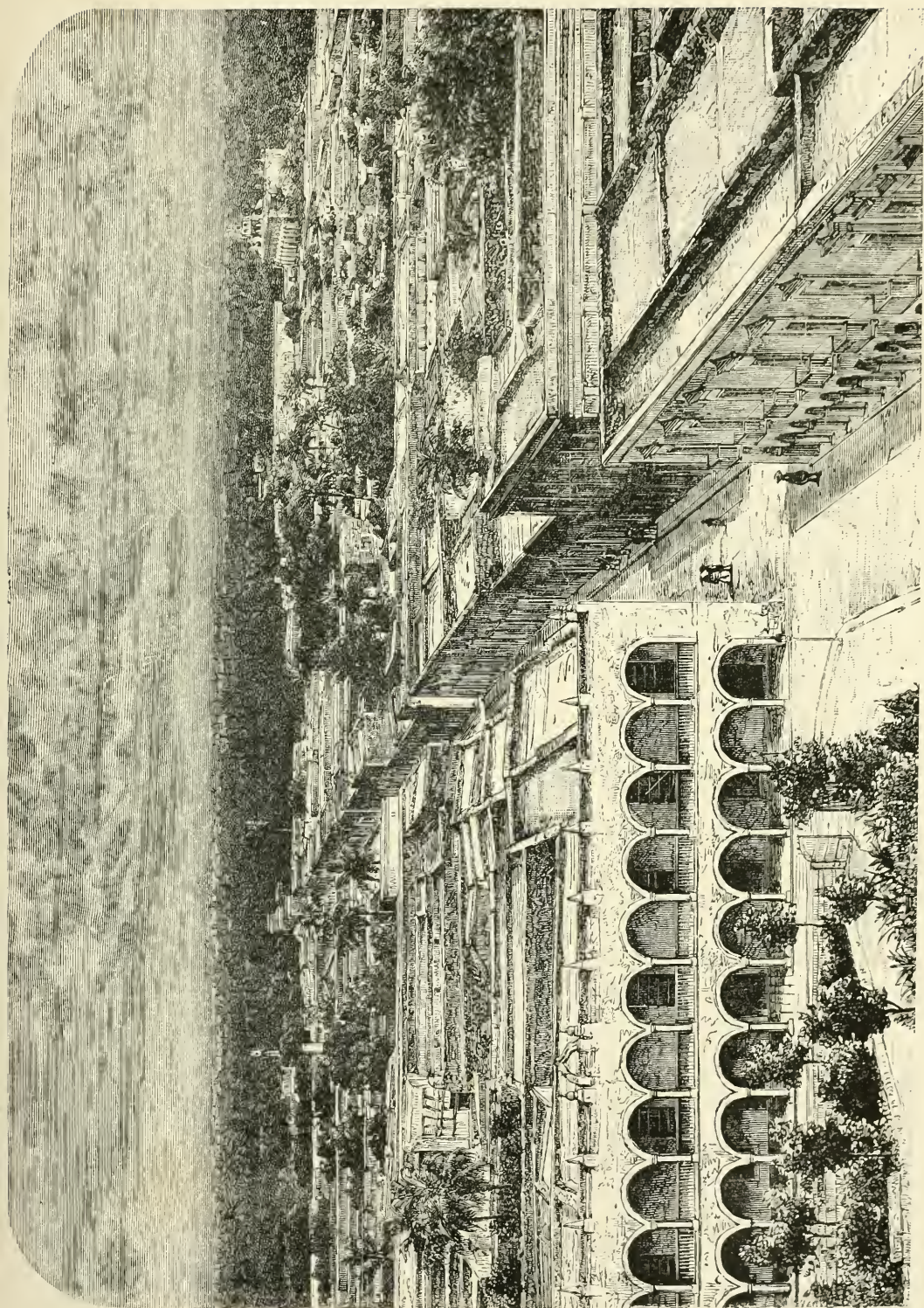
In 1518, Grijalva landed at Cozumel, when he perceived on the opposite coast a city supposed to be Tuloom-Pamal or

Paamul; he followed the route of his predecessor and halted in the Islands of Sacrificios and Uluo, opposite the site of future Vera Cruz; and lastly Cortez, who, in 1519, found here Aguilar and further on in Tabasco Marina.

The name of Yucatan is variously derived from *Chac-nuitan*; *Tectecan*, *tectetan*, "we don't understand," from a misunderstanding by the Spaniards when the natives were questioned about the name of their country; or from *Yuca-Tan*, "land of yuca," not to be confounded with the yuca of our gardens, for the former yielded a substance out of which the Spaniards made *cazabe*, bread; and *Ciu-Than*, "say yourself," or, according to Landa, *Ulumil y etel Ceh*, "land of turkeys and deer." Another authority, Ramesal, believes the name to be derived from Tectetan-Ylatli and Teloquitan;* Cogolludo adopts these various appellations, remarking that as the country was named after its chief city, it differed at each successive epoch, being in ancient times Mayapan, but in the time of the writer Campeche. Ternaux-Compans declares that from the fall of Mayapan to the coming of the Spaniards, the country had no general name, but was severally called after each province, as district of Choaca, Bakhahal, Campeche, etc.; but there is little doubt that the name of Yucatan, at the coming of Europeans and afterwards, was Maya. However that may be, we will turn to the monuments, which afford a far surer guide whereon to construct a history of this country so rich in works of "los antiguos."

Progreso is a miserable hamlet surrounded by low-lying swamps; here the luggage is examined, but in our case only *pro formâ*, and we are glad to resume our seats and to steam out of this unhealthy zone, although the country we

* Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. 2.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF MERIDA.

traverse, on which nothing grows save brambles and brush-wood, is no less flat or monotonous. We come presently to immense estates of *henequen*, a kind of agave, having long narrow leaves, yielding a solid shining thread, which is hardly known out of American markets; patches of verdure, bananas, palm-trees, and maritime pines, betray now and again a private residence, while smoking mills show the factories where the henequen is being prepared ready for exportation.

Were it not for the mysterious spirit of "los antiguos," which seems to fill the whole country, the landscape to a less enthusiastic explorer must appear dreary and melancholy in the extreme. We pass eminences on our right on which once stood noble temples; these remains carry me back to the time when I first visited these parts, and when these ruins fixed my resolve to make archæology the business of my life. Next came a few straggling hamlets; groups of dark women in short petticoats, and naked urchins, gaze on us with wondering eyes as they stand at the entrance of their huts while we speed along. We reach Merida after a run of three hours over a distance of ten leagues, where we learn that no hotel or house is to be found, and it is only after searching the whole place that we can at last secure a room of some fifteen feet square, in which my two companions and myself have to settle down. There is but one atrociously bad restaurant where to get any kind of food; our thoughts, however, are taken up with exploring the ruins rather than with a good *maître d'hôtel*; we find, besides, a small Anglo-American colony, and in their midst our abominable fare is soon forgotten.

Francisco de Montejo, who founded Merida, had occupied Chichen in 1527, but had been compelled to abandon it and seek reinforcements in Mexico. On his return he was enabled,

through a traitorous cacique, to establish himself here, and built Merida in 1542. The conquest of Yucatan was longer and beset with greater difficulties than that of Mexico; here the Spaniards were continually threatened by a warlike population, ever on the alert to raise the standard of rebellion. The history of this people can only be read on the monuments they have left, which have given rise to so many divergent hypotheses. Yet documents were not wanting, and had the religious zeal of the men of that time been less ill-judged, they would have found in the various and multiform manuscripts, in the charts or maps, in the idols, in the pottery and living traditions, ample and reliable materials from which to write an exhaustive history of the Maya civilisation. But the Spaniards were more careful to demolish than to preserve. Zumarraga, Bishop of Mexico, destroyed all the Aztec annals he could lay his hand upon, and Landa, Bishop of Merida, made an *auto-da-fé* of all the monuments he could collect, having done which, he set himself to writing his history, "*De las Cosas de Yucatan.*"*

All there now remains for us are mere gleanings, the interpretation of certain passages in this very Landa, in Cogolludo and Herrera, and above all by a careful comparison between these monuments and bas-reliefs with those we already know; for with their help only can we hope to reconstruct a past which becomes more familiar the more it is studied. These monuments have been endowed with fabulous antiquity; whereas, on the

* From data obtained from Pablo Moreno, and a letter of the Jesuit Don Domingo, dated 1805, we can give the following list of objects destroyed by Landa:

- 5,000 idols of various form and dimensions;
- 13 huge stones, which were used as altars;
- 22 smaller, of various shapes;
- 27 manuscripts on deer skins;
- 197 of all shapes and sizes.

To this should be added the *auto-da-fé* at Mani, in which numerous manuscripts were consumed. Cogolludo, tome i. appendix to book iv. p. 479. Campeche, 1842.

strength of my explorations, I assert that they are comparatively recent.

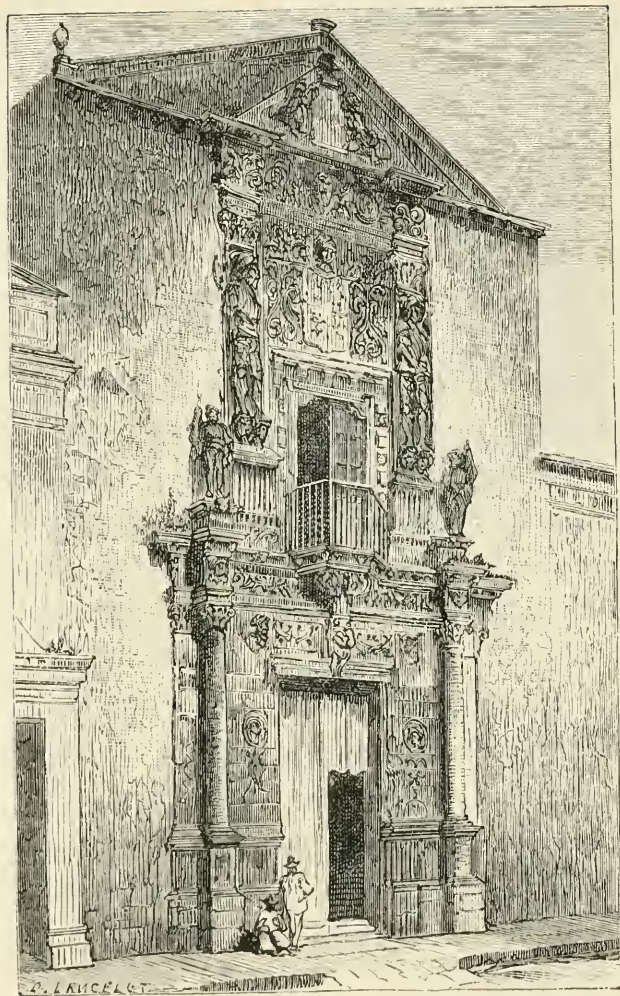
Merida stands on the site of ancient *Ti-hoo* or *T-hoo*, one of the chief cities of the peninsula; but nothing positive is known, and tradition is almost silent respecting it. If we are to believe the Spaniards, it had long been abandoned on their arrival; but this is not borne out by facts, for although they beheld a dense vegetation amidst the pyramids, the edifices on their summits were entire;* moreover, Montejo was able to quarter his troops here, as well as the Indian contingent from Mani. Furthermore, Eligio Ancona, the modern Yucatec historian, describes a celebrated sanctuary known as *H-Chun-Caan*, "The centre and foundation of heaven," which was the object of great veneration; it follows therefore that its imposing ceremonies were presided over by revered and powerful priests, that the temples and palaces in Merida were standing after the arrival of the Spaniards,† although not in the vast proportions assigned to them by the Abbé Brasseur, whose lively imagination is apt to lead him astray.

Merida was built with the materials of the Indian city, and like all the Spanish places of the New World, is but a huge chess-board, with streets running at right angles, consisting of square blocks of buildings. The centre is occupied by a large plaza, having a waterless fountain and gardens, the flowers of which are perishing for want of water; as for the young trees planted about, they doubtless will afford shade to future generations; for the present the glare of this open

* See Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. 42, p. 333 and following.

† Lorenzo Bienvenida, in a letter to the King of Spain (1548), says that the monuments were deserted and the pyramids covered with large trees, and that the natives of the place lived in straw huts. The city, therefore, had been destroyed a few years before, as Mayapan had been, of which no trace was visible, whereas the monuments at T-hoo were entire, but its history has been lost.

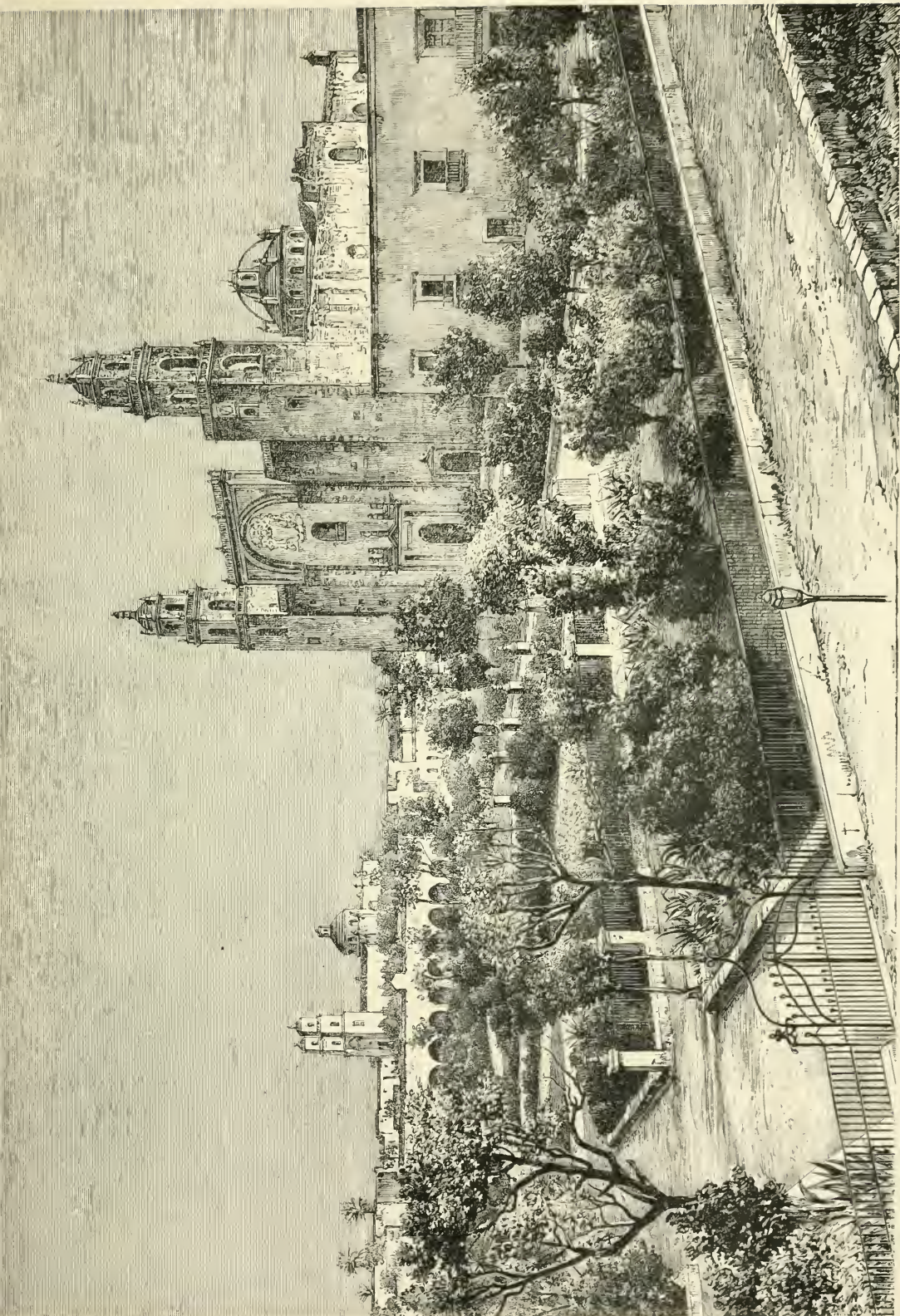
space is intolerable. When I visited it some twenty years ago, if not so symmetrical it was certainly more picturesque. In the plaza are found the municipal palace and the cathedral,



MONTEJO'S HOUSE, MERIDA.

of monumental proportions for a place of 30,000 souls; it numbered, probably, only the third of this when it was built in 1598. Its erection cost the pious Meridians £60,000, equivalent at the present day to fifteen times that sum, but it is doubtful if even with its greater population so large a sum could now be raised. The front, 179 feet wide, is occupied by a central pavilion in which the principal entrance intervenes, ornamented by an indifferent

Corinthian portico, over which, at a height of some 97 feet, a great vaulted arch supports an elegant gallery; on each side of the pavilion are two steeples with a number of galleries narrowing in upward succession, forming with their balustrades a



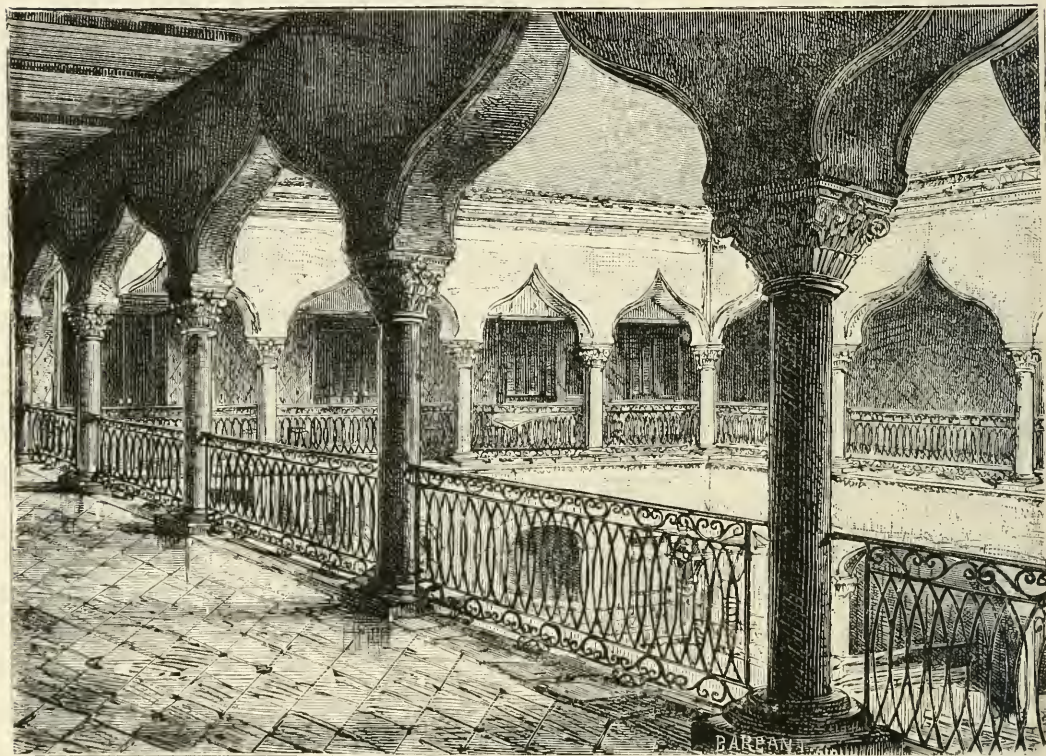
CATHEDRAL.

pleasing contrast to the plain façade. The interior of the church, 289 feet long, is imposing ; it consists of three naves with round arches, supported by twelve immense columns, and twenty of like dimensions imbedded in the walls. Small chapels run along the sides, and the structure altogether bears the impress of solidity which is so conspicuous a feature of the conquerors' work. To the south of the square stands Montejo's house, bearing the date of 1541 ; it is the oldest in Merida, and an interesting specimen of that epoch. It may be worthy of mention that the sculptures in this house are as defaced as those of the Indian monuments, which seems to indicate similarity of date. The pillars on each side of the entrance bear aloft two Spanish soldiers, whilst on the first floor, by the window, knights armed cap-à-pie are standing on two recumbent Indians, personating the subjugation of the race. The façade with its columns, statues, arabesques, and shields, is a fair specimen of American Renaissance ; but if the composition was Spanish, the work, probably, was due to Indian hands, for at the time of its erection the Spaniards were a handful of soldiers or adventurers, whose pride would not have suffered them to do any manual labour.

Artisans were plentiful among the Mayas, who have interspersed their country with so many remarkable monuments, and whose building aptitude is notable even at the present day. Beside these edifices the town, with very few exceptions, is an assemblage of low houses having but the ground floor, while all the windows are stoutly grated to secure the inmates against housebreakers. But the impression produced by this unpromising exterior soon gives place to agreeable surprise on being introduced into spacious apartments opening on the "patio," encompassed by Moorish cloisters. The patios are planted with flowers, shrubs, and palm-trees, which, towering

above the terraced roofs, break the monotonous lines of the town panorama. Our cut shows Don Alvaro Peon's house with its charming gallery on the first floor.

All movement and life centre towards the market-place, where Spaniards, Indians, and Meztizos are seen in their picturesque costumes ; sellers are crying out their goods, con-



DON ALVARO PEON'S HOUSE.

sisting of pottery and baskets, the facsimiles of those we bought at Tula ; somewhat further we come across some natives bending under heavy loads of "ramon," the green twigs of a particular tree, affording the only forage in a country without grass. Here young caballeros are stopped by cumbrous carts taking up the whole street with their enormous bales of henequen ; further on, women in snowy white costumes

'sit in long rows, offering with a pretty grace their small stock-in-trade spread before them. Among this motley crowd I spied a diminutive "aguador" looking so bonnie that I wished



FRUIT SELLERS.

to take his photograph, making his less favoured companions envious thereat.*

The Mayas, both in type and language, are unlike both the surrounding tribes and those of the plateaux; they are

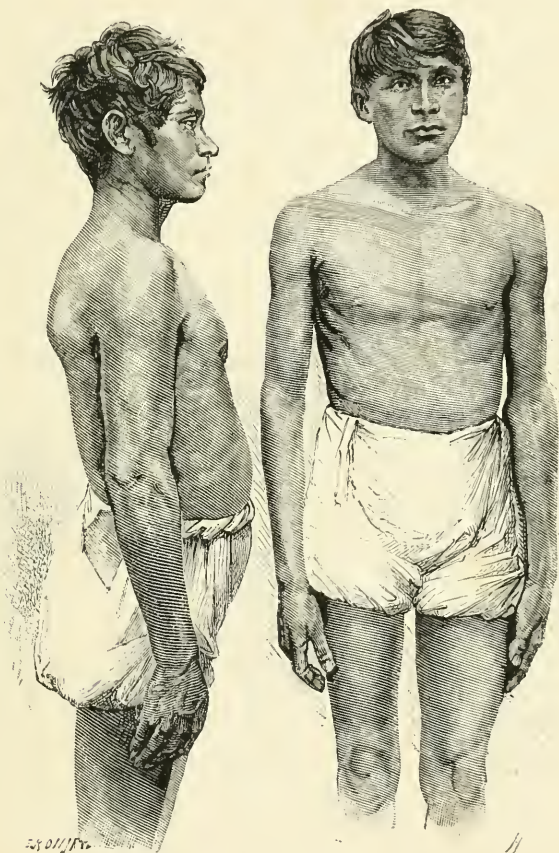
* The types we give are pure Indian and not Meztizas.

said to be an ancient race, but this assumption is based on no positive proof. Cogolludo believes the first inhabitants to have come from Cuba; and Agassiz, who studied these tribes in their respective homes, leans to the same opinion. Traditions and ancient writers, confirmed in modern times by Humboldt, all are unanimous in asserting that this country was invaded towards the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century by the Toltecs.* Granted their building genius, seeing that both the architecture and the decorations of the edifices correspond to the descriptions left by historians respecting Toltec palaces and temples of the Uplands, we are in a position to affirm that there was no other civilisation in Central America except the Toltec civilisation, and that if another existed, our having met with no trace of it gives us the right to deny it altogether.

When two civilisations come in contact, the outcome is a mixture of both which is easy of recognition. Take as an instance India after the Mohammedan Conquest, where Indo-Arabic monuments are notable to the most inexperienced eye. If, therefore, Yucatan had possessed an indigenous civilisation, we should certainly have found monuments or ruins indicating as much; or if destroyed by time, we should have found others of a composite character, showing the fusion of the two races, whereas nothing of the kind occurs, and the older monuments, or those which appear so, are in no respect different from the more recent or Toltec ones. Consequently the Mayas, who were peculiarly well fitted for receiving a superior culture, had their share in the artistic manifestations to be met with through the length and breadth of the peninsula, and being the stronger nationality they opposed a stouter and longer

* "The tribes who from Aztlan established themselves in Yucatan and Guatemala, had reached a certain degree of civilisation."—HUMBOLDT.

resistance to the hated invaders. Even now, after three centuries of degrading oppression, a Maya, or Maya-Toltec, preserves distinctive characteristics by which he can be singled out from among a number of different nationalities, nor would it be easy to find among the rural classes of Europe men of



MAYA TYPES.

a better build, or with more intelligent and open countenances. Their heads are round, their eyes black, their noses arched, their ears and mouth small, they are deep-chested, straight-jawed, with round chin and sound square teeth, their hair is black, straight, and coarse, their complexion reddish brown.

The form of government was monarchical and almost absolute;

below were the nobles, the priests, the people, and the slaves. Such a partition, amounting to almost castes, presupposes an anterior conquest. The lands were divided between the crown, the nobility, the temples, and the people. The division was by no means equal, by far the greater proportion being appropriated by the king, the aristocracy, and the temples. The lands of the people were the common property of the community and not of individuals. Every member of the community had a portion suitable to his position and requirements, which he was entitled to hold as long as he cultivated it. As the soil was very poor, no plough was used in ancient times, nor later by the Spaniards. Four-fifths of the land was suffered to lie fallow, and every five years the brushwood was cut down and burnt to manure the ground ready to receive the Indian corn. The work was chiefly done by men; the women planting the seed, husking the corn, and doing such light labours as were suitable to their weaker frames. The peasants were bound to till the land for their lord, to supply him with game, fish, flowers, salt, and other comforts, and to accompany him in battle.

The campaigns were short, sharp, and severe; for as commissariat was unknown, they were generally decided in one engagement, when no pity was shown the vanquished, no quarter given, and what could not be plundered was destroyed. This explains the number of ruined cities which were rebuilt and the new monuments erected after each war. Diaz remarks that the military dress of the warriors consisted of a breast-piece made of quilted cotton, which was completely arrow-proof, and was adopted by the conquerors in place of their heavy steel armour. Their head-dress was a casque ornamented with rich feathers, prominent amongst which were the quetzal. The rank and file wore no clothing except the *maxtli* in battle,

but by painting their faces and bodies in grotesque patterns of brilliant colours, and covering their heads with raw cotton, they presented a fierce and gaudy appearance. Painting the face and body with red, black, and white was universal; on the return from an expedition the warrior's paint was substituted for tattooing. "Stripes, serpents, animals, and birds," says Cogolludo, "were the favourite devices for this kind of decoration, according to their military order; the warrior being entitled to a fresh hieroglyph after each notable feat of arms, an old veteran came to have his whole body covered with them."

Owing to the warm climate the Maya dress was simple and scanty in the extreme. Men wore almost universally the *maxtli* (a long strip of cotton cloth, wound round the loins); children up to two years of age wore no clothes at all; the baby girls, like those in Java, had a string round their waist, from which depended a shell, the removal of which was looked upon as sinful. The dress of the nobles, both men and women, consisted of loose tunics and flowing mantles dyed in brilliant and variegated colours. The hair was worn short, cut in a fringe on the forehead; no beard was allowed, and the few hairs that made their appearance on the face were immediately extracted. Squinting was fashionable, and mothers ensured it for their daughters by suffering a tuft of hair to hang over their eyes. Their ears, nose, and lips were adorned with jewels. Cranial disfigurement seems to have been confined to the priests and nobles.* According to Landa,† four or five days after birth the child was laid with the face down on a bed of osiers, and the head compressed between two pieces of wood, one on the forehead and the other on the back, the boards being kept in place for several days until the desired cranial flattening was

* Bernal Diaz, "Hist. de la Conquista de la Nueva España," tome i. chap. iv.

† Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. xx.

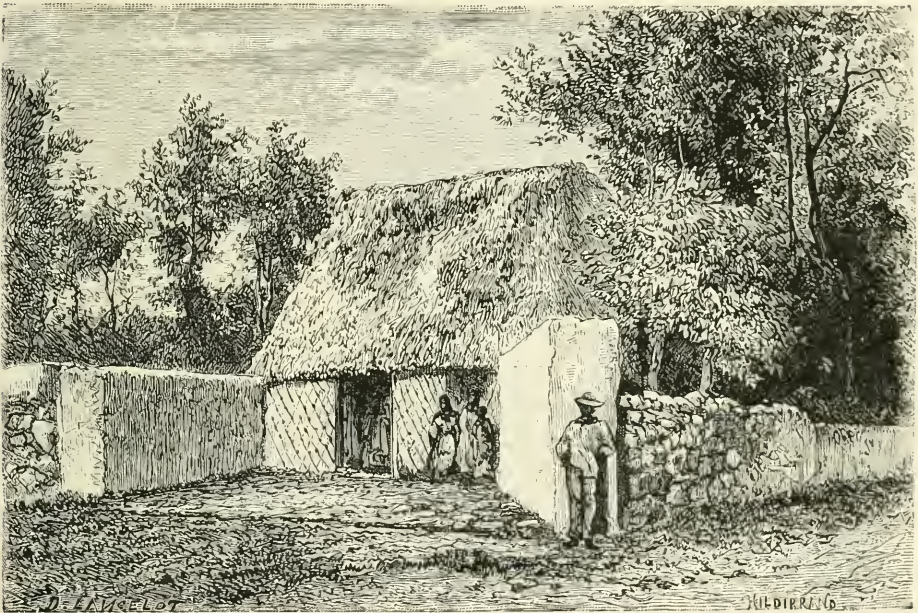
effected. This Spartan process was often attended with disastrous results. Tamenes practised this flattening on the forehead only, which was thus better adapted to the carrying of burdens. Disfigured Tamenes skulls were found by us at Teotihuacan, and on the pottery of Vera Cruz.

Eligio Ancona draws a mournful picture of the Mayas before the Conquest: "They were much oppressed by the king, the nobles, and in a special manner by the restless and ambitious caciques constantly at war with each other; the education of the youth of both sexes rested entirely with the priests, the clans of the people were ignorant and degraded; men were sold in the market or sacrificed on the altars; women excluded from society and the family circle," etc. The nation prospered in spite of it all; the country was densely populated, while the monuments everywhere attest that the arts flourished.

What have the Spaniards done for them? Have they relieved their misery, dispelled their ignorance, minimised their vices? The peninsula counted millions before the Conquest; there are not a hundred thousand at the present day, and they are more sunk and wretched than at any time of their existence. For a nation is always found to have the religion and the Government best suited to its character or degree of civilisation; let extraneous institutions, whether civil or religious, however superior, be imposed upon them, they seem only to stultify and dishearten a people they were not intended for.

Meztizas are one of the chief attractions of Merida; they are looked upon as an inferior caste, but this they seem to accept with indifference, revenging themselves on society by their attractive ways, which it is not given to man to resist; for even those who are not beautiful, and they are few, have a winning grace, a peculiar charm all their own. To a certain extent this is due to their becoming costume,

which consists in a loose tunic with short sleeves and square body, leaving arms and neck bare ; this tunic, *uipil*, is tastefully embroidered at the neck, arms, and bottom with red, blue, or green devices ; the under-skirt, *fustan*, is trimmed with rich lace, while their clustering black hair is set off by a silver arrow ; they wear rings on their fingers, and chains of gold depend from their lovely necks, often constituting their whole dowry.



MEZTIZOS' HOUSE.

Meztizos have a quarter at the outskirts of the town allotted to them, where they inhabit oblong thatched cottages decorated outside with a diamond pattern showing where the lines join. It is probable that these huts are identical with those of the Mayas of ancient days, while there is no doubt as to the decorations being like the mouldings of the old palaces. A hamac, one or two trunks to put their clothes in, a *butaca* or low leather arm-chair, compose the sole furniture of these poor dwellings. From a little distance, the Meztizo quarter looks

like a cool, pleasant grove, for each hut stands on ground covering a quarter of an acre planted with ramon. Meridan ladies are never seen out of doors except at church, or during their evening drive. Church hours are unusually early here, beginning at three a.m., when all the bells of the town are set ringing, to awake, I suppose, a slumbering population.

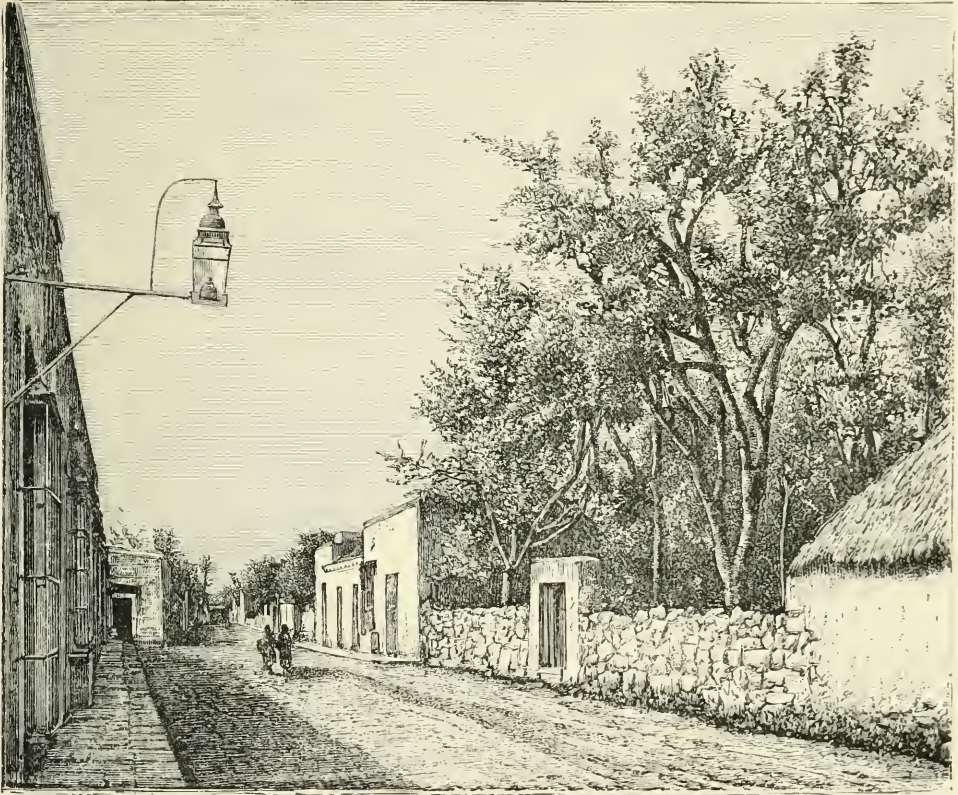
Meridans are sociable and more conversant with the questions of the day than might be expected: two scholars, Eligio and Canon Ancona, have written both of the times preceding and those following the Conquest; while the rising generation of men is studious, intelligent, and manly; literary meetings, periodicals, reviews, concerts, theatres, and dances, keep the population pleasantly occupied. The civility I experienced with regard to my mission was very welcome and flattering to my self-respect, the good canon presenting me with an obsidian sceptre, a marvel of workmanship, now to be seen in the Trocadéro. This people, unlike the Mexicans of the Uplands, are good men of business, and what trade or industry the country possesses is entirely in their own hands. They have the characteristics of a race in its manhood, enduring, self-possessed, patient, and industrious. The only falling off noticeable (due to the climate) is a diminution in their stature, and a disproportionately large female element. Never were their qualities better tested than during their social war, when they stood single-handed and succeeded, after years of hard fighting and sore distress, in recovering their municipal rights.*

Their soil may be poor, they may not have mineral wealth like their neighbours, but their thrift and industrious habits bring their own reward. It would be interesting to tell the

* See note at end.

long struggle of this gallant people to regain their independence; suffice it to say that the risings of the natives began in 1761, to break forth into a formidable insurrection in 1846, which has continued with hardly any interruption to the present day.

The Indian, whether his spirit is broken by long oppres-



A STREET IN MERIDA.

sion, or from some other cause, seems to shrink and melt away at the approach of the white man, and to retire more and more from the beaten paths of civilisation.

The environs of Merida are interspersed with numerous haciendas; amongst these Ascorra is certainly one of the most picturesque. Three *norias*, or deep wells, give ample water

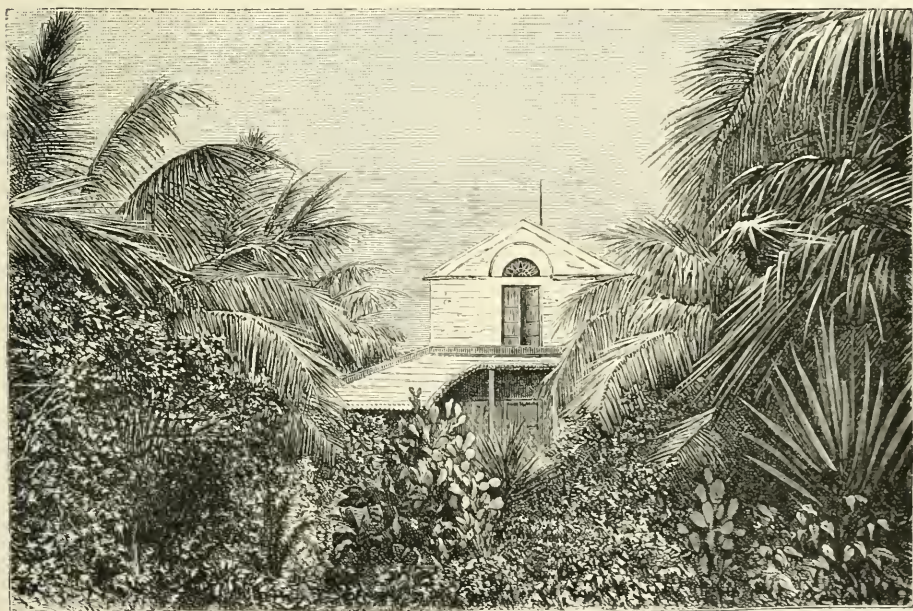
for the requirements of the household, the irrigation of the garden, and the plantation.

The house, with its verandah festooned with creepers, its flower-beds, shrubs, and palms, is a charming picture of beauty and comfort; multitudes of ducks, mandarins, swans, and flamingoes people the ponds, while rills of water cool the air and add to the enjoyment of this lovely spot. Here I noticed for the first time a liana bearing a curious large flower of $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 9 inches wide, with a filament of more than 1 foot 9 inches, making over 3 feet altogether. The colour is bluish green outside, while the inside is like a spring muslin, with red devices on a dazzling white ground, deepening down the calyx into a rich red velvet bordered with prone hairs. The bud resembles a web-footed animal swimming, hence its name *flor de pato*, "duck's flower." It may not improperly be compared to an immense aristochia. This liana was, I believe, imported from the Antilles; but nothing is perfect in this world, not even this marvellous flower, which astonished both Agassiz and myself, for no sooner is it fully blown than it stinks so abominably that its immediate removal becomes an imperative necessity.

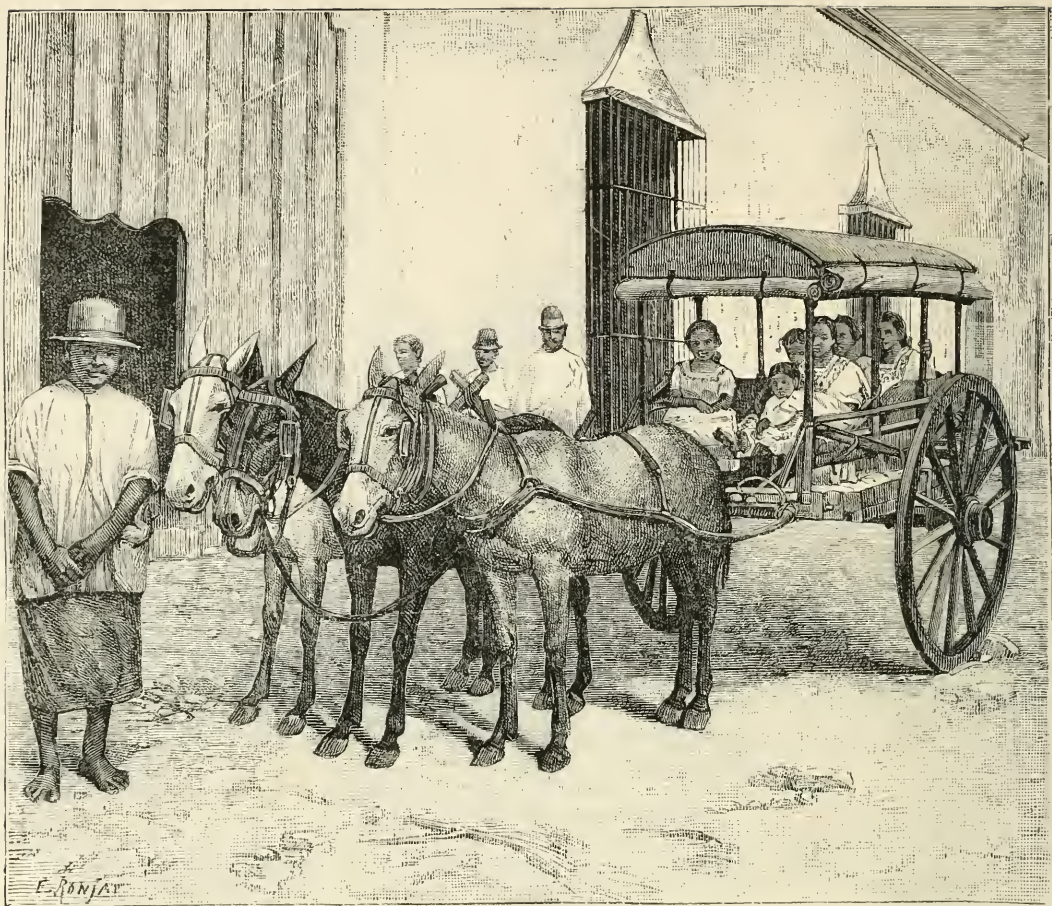
To lay out this lovely garden, it was necessary to blast the rocks forming the crust of this country; and as the work is still going on, it enabled Mr. Agassiz to study its formation, which, like Florida, belongs to the recent Tertiary epoch. We tarried but one day at Ascorra, for we wished to visit the Tepich Hacienda, where the largest henequen factory in these parts is to be seen, worked by machinery, a great innovation for this country. The exports of this important industry are reckoned at £600 a year. The want of hands, however, precludes the possibility for the present of any scheme being mooted to give it greater extension. The country is not suffi-

ciently favoured to tempt immigrants; unless it were Malay coolies, who would not suffer from the climate, and who, moreover, when crossed with Meztizas or Indian women, would produce a magnificent race.

We resume our seats for Acanceh, formerly a populous centre, as testified by three great pyramids still extant in the plaza, which supported ancient temples on their summits. In one of them which furnished the material for the builders of the station, fine sculptured blocks, like those employed at Uxmal for building purposes, were found; together with several funeral objects, fine obsidians, a magnificent sceptre, in my possession, and vases identical with those we unearthed at Teotihuacan. These affinities and resemblances between Yucatec vestiges and those of the Uplands, are of constant occurrence.



HACIENDA OF ASCORRA.



VOLAN COCHÉ.

CHAPTER XVI.

AKÉ AND IZAMAL.

Departure—A Family Exploration—"Volan coché"—Tixpénal and Tixkokob—Cenoté—Ruins of Aké—Historical Rectification—Small Pyramid—Tlachtli—A Large Galléry—Explorations—A Strange Theory—Picoté—Architecture of Yucatan at Different Epochs.

ON our return from Merida, an expedition to Aké was organised consisting of the American Consul, Mr. Aymé, his wife, her pet dog Shuty, and ourselves. Mr. Aymé is an energetic archæologist, well acquainted with the ruins, so that his offer to accompany us was most welcome. The ruins of Aké are on

a hacienda which belongs to Don Alvaro Peon, from whom a permit was easily obtained; he furnishing us besides with a large hamper to supply our wants, which his Chinese cook was to take to the hacienda.

Journeys in the interior of the peninsula may be performed either by diligence or "volan coché," a national vehicle, made entirely of wood, save the iron tires of the wheels. An oblong box balanced on two leather springs is placed on a heavy under-frame, the bottom of the carriage lined with a stout flax net, on which is spread a mattress, to deaden to some extent the jolting of these abominable roads. The coachman sits in front, while the back is occupied by the baggage; when the *coché* has but one occupant, he generally lies full-length on the mattress; but if not he sits Turkish fashion, which in time becomes very irksome to one not to the manner born; as to the natives, it seems to be immaterial how many are packed away in a "volan." Although well hung, the swaying of these *cochés* is truly amazing, especially when the driver is drunk and sets his mules full gallop; but most wonderful of all is that nothing ever happens, and in my numerous expeditions I was only once upset.

Aké lies ten leagues east of Merida, which can be reached by the Izamal road, through immense estates of agave, leaving on the right two mounds covered with ruins and passing Tixpénal, a wretched-looking village, as indeed is the whole country around; but the half-burnt, tumbled-down hovels are the work of the revolted natives, who in 1846 occupied the village and set fire to it.

Some three leagues further lies Tixkokob, where we halt to have a cup of chocolate. The inhabitants are great hammock-makers, and through the open doors, multicoloured nets may be descried in every stage of progress. They are the only

beds used by the natives, and cost from half-a-crown to four shillings, but those made at Valladolid are more expensive. Here we leave the main road for a cross path, when we may be said to become fully acquainted with a *coche's* peculiarities. We are rocked to and fro in the most alarming manner; we hold on to the net like grim death, for fear of being pitched out on the stony road or landed among prickly pears at every turn. It is with a sigh of relief that we reach Ekmul, long after the curfew has been sounded, and the place lies wrapped in the silence and deep shadows of night. We found the hacienda strongly bolted, for the inmates had given us up; but the loud barking of the dogs brought Don Peon's mayordomo, and we were soon made at home and as comfortable as the somewhat dilapidated nature of the dwelling would allow.

We were up at early dawn, when we found under the thatched verandah a number of Don Peon's servants, with hatchets and *machetes*, awaiting our orders for clearing the main pyramid, and while so engaged, we proposed to visit a *cenoté* lying on the other side of a thick wood containing various ruins. This hacienda is stocked with horned cattle, and we were warned to provide against garrapatas, the most terrible wood-lice in existence. We had taken, or fancied we had taken, all the precautions which the ingenuity of man, alarmed at the approach of danger, could devise. But against the voracity of a famished garrapata what can avail? This insidious insect is invisible in its early youth; thinner than the thinnest paper, it steals, it creeps in quite easily between two stitches!

But what is a "cenoté"?

Although Yucatan is uncut by rivers or streams, an immense sheet of water and ill-defined currents occupy its under surface; these waters are near the surface along the coast, but low down in the interior of the peninsula, where the

calcareous layer is of great thickness. Localities where these waters can be reached, whether through the natural subsidence of the soil or artificial pits, receive the name of *cenoté*. When the water flows at a slight depth, and the calcareous layer has only been partly eaten away, there follows an irregular sinking which forms a cave open from side to side; but when the crust is thicker, and the stream has a regular course, the soil is generally corroded in a circular space; and the vault thus formed lacking support, falls in, when an immense open well is made, as for instance at Chichen-Itza. Often the crust is so deep, that the soft parts only crumble down or are carried away, leaving frequently a small aperture towards the top, fashioning a real grotto with stalactites and stalagmites, as at Salacun and Valladolid. It sometimes happens that the calcareous crust is exceedingly thick, when a gigantic subterranean passage is formed, as at Bolonchen; in a word, all the varieties which are produced by the silent work of an undisturbed stream in a friable soil, may be witnessed. It is worthy of note that most civilised centres in Yucatan rose around these natural reservoirs; for the early settlers were probably unacquainted with the means of sinking artificial wells or cisterns, as they did later at Uxmal.

The Aké cenoté is thirty feet below the surface, and belongs to the early series of these natural phenomena. It forms a gigantic vault slightly curved, to which the accidents of the rock give a picturesque and grand aspect. The bottom is occupied by an extensive piece of clear fresh water, peopled by a multitude of small fish some three inches long, while thousands of swallows flit about, filling the whole place with their joyous twitter.

We left the cenoté to come back through the woods, spying out if peradventure we could perceive any ruins from under

their deep, green shroud, brushing unwittingly past the trailing branches of the trees, suffocating literally in our well-closed garments; no unusual sensation, no unseemly irritation had as yet alarmed us. Shuty was the first to show that all was not well with her. We had already noticed some signs of uneasiness as we emerged from the cenoté; she would suddenly stop, to nibble her paws, or perform some extraordinary gymnastic feat; gyrating, running, and barking joyously at the empty space.

We came presently to some very intricate parts of the wood, when the somewhat fictitious gaiety of Shuty turned into groans of acute agony, rolling madly on the grass, biting herself, and howling lamentably until her mistress took her into her arms, to find her alive with garrapatas, as indeed we all were; there was nothing for it but to return to the hacienda as quickly as possible, and institute a minute and conscientious investigation. A complete change of clothes became necessary, ere we could sit down to the very excellent breakfast prepared for us by Don Peon's cook; as for Mrs. Aymé and Shuty, they did not venture on the perils of another exploration in the fated woods.

Here I again noticed the same curious phenomenon I had observed at Palenque with regard to concentric circles in the trees; on the great pyramid which Don Peon had caused to be cleared only six months before, and which was now thickly covered with young shoots our men were fast demolishing, I counted no less than seven or eight circles on the twigs.

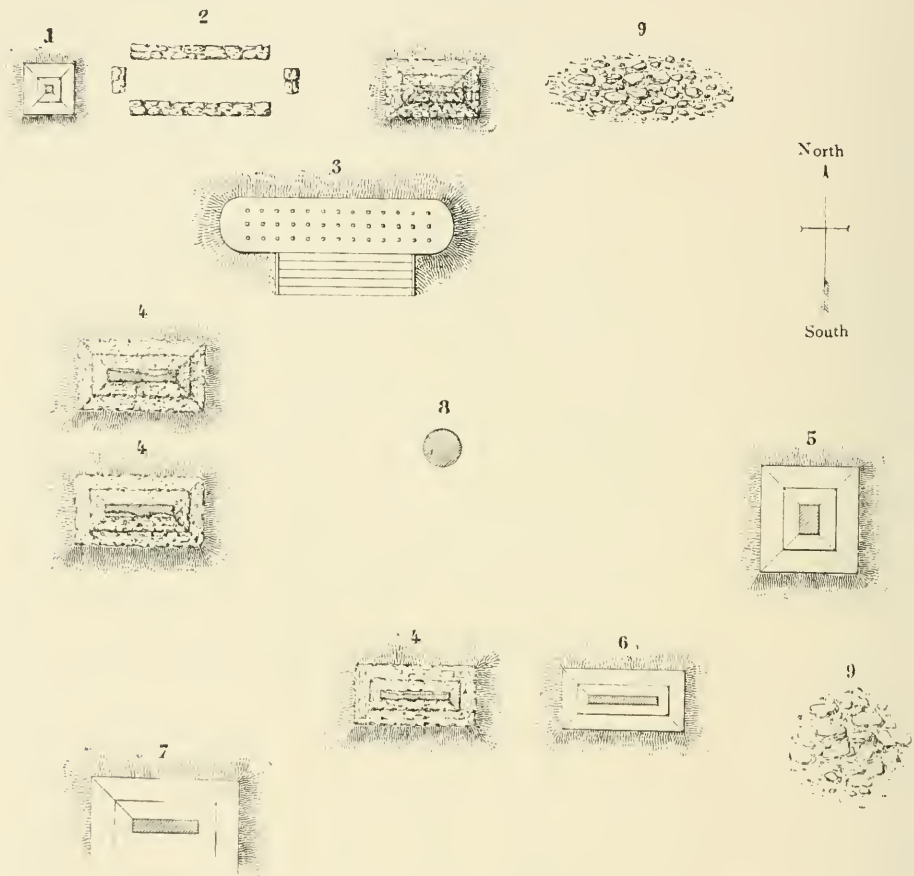
The ruins of Aké are hardly known; Stephens, their only visitor besides myself, calls the gallery "colossal, the ruins of the palace ruder, older, and more cyclopean in aspect than any he had previously seen." Quoting Cogolludo, apparently from memory, he adds that the Spaniards halted at a place called

Aké, where a great battle was fought ; had he read Cogolludo properly, he would have seen that the place meant could not be Aké, which lay out of the line of march of the conquerors. We have had occasion to observe before that Montejo landed on the eastern coast of Yucatan at a place now opposite to Valladolid, where he took possession of the country ; various other points are also given, but it is certain that he made his way to Coni in Chiapas, halted at Coba, and continued his march to Ce-Aké, where he had to fight the Indians for two days ; hence he directed his course to Chichen-Itza, which he wished to colonise, because "its great buildings made it easy of defence." * This was in 1527 ; but Ce-Aké was thirty-five leagues east of the ruins of another Aké, once a populous centre, as shown by fifteen or twenty pyramids of all dimensions, crowned with ruinous palaces, scattered over a space of about half a square mile. The largest are grouped so as to form a rectangle, encircling a vast courtyard, the centre of which is occupied by a large stone of punishment called *picoté*, of universal use before and after the Conquest, and still found at Uxmal and various other places. An old Indian of Tenosiqué assured me that such a stone was standing some thirty years ago in the plaza. The culprit was stripped and tied to the *picoté* previous to receiving the bastinado. This custom still prevails at Tumbala, an Indian village lying between Palenque and S. Christobal. According to the Indian moral code, punishment makes a man clean, and I have seen natives who, to have a clear conscience, requested a punishment no one dreamt of inflicting.

The plan we give is, unfortunately, very incorrect, but such as it is it will enable the reader to follow out our description

* Cogolludo, tome i. lib. ii. caps. v. and vi.

of the ruins. To the north-west is a three-storeyed pyramid like those at Palenque, built with large blocks laid together without mortar, about 40 feet high, crowned by a small structure whose roof has crumbled away but whose walls are



PLAN OF THE RUINS OF AKÉ.

No. 1, Small Pyramid. No. 2, Tlachtli, Tennis-court. No. 3, Large Gallery. No. 4, Ruined Palaces. No. 5, Akabna. No. 6, Xnuc. No. 7, Succuna. No. 8, Picoté. No. 9, Various Ruins.

still standing. We recognise the same style of structure we observed at Tula and Teotihuacan, a style we shall meet again both in Yucatan and in the district of the Lacandones. It may be stated that pyramids with esplanades, both here and at Palenque, although built with large stones, are smaller

than those of the monuments in other places, and if the blocks were laid in mortar it has crumbled away like the cement which formed the outer surface.

The dimensions of this structure are so diminutive that it cannot have been anything but a temple, forming part of the next monument which it commands. The latter from its rectangular arrangement recalls to mind the so-called fortresses



SMALL PYRAMID OF AKÉ.

at Tula and Teotihuacan, which were in reality *tlachtli*, "tennis-courts."

The third monument has given rise to many conjectures; it is a large pyramid with an immense staircase, presenting a new and extraordinary feature, entirely different from all we have seen in Yucatan. Was this a specimen of a different civilisation, or simply a particular building which belonged to an earlier epoch?—were the questions which presented themselves to my somewhat bewildered imagination.

This strange monument is surmounted by thirty-six pillars (only twenty-nine are still standing) each 4 feet square, and from 14 to 16 feet high. These pillars are arranged in three parallel rows 10 feet apart from north to south, and 15 from east to west; whilst the esplanade supporting them is 212 feet long by 46 feet wide, rounded off at the extremities like the Hunpitoc pyramid at Izamal looking north-south. Each pillar is composed of ten square stones 3 ft. 10 in. on one side, varying in thickness from 1 ft. 3 in. to 1 ft. 6 in. A gigantic staircase with steps some 4 ft. 7 in. to 6 ft. 7 in. long and about 1 ft. to 1 ft. 6 in. thick, leads to the summit.

It was urged that all these monuments had been constructed with uncemented stones, as neither cement nor mortar were found at Aké. This, however, is an error, for I observed that the builders used stones cut on the side facing the outer surface of the pillars, leaving the inner sides uncut; and as they did not perfectly fit one into another, but left cavities sometimes 3 inches deep, they were filled up with fragments of stone rubble which I found, and the whole was no doubt smoothed and polished over with mortar or cement.*

But what was this singular structure intended for? If for a covered gallery, the wood or thatch roof has long since disappeared and left no trace. Could it have been a commemorative monument? We know not, save that it is the only monument of the kind in Yucatan, and that its dimensions are far from colossal. Not that theories are wanting; some writers have gone so far as to imagine this monument to have been erected to commemorate periods or reigns, and each block to represent either a *ahan-katun*, "twenty-four years," or a century, *katun*, "fifty-two years." Now, as there

* See note at end.



GREAT PYRAMID AND GALLERY OF AKÉ.

are thirty-six pillars having each ten stones, this monument would be, by the first computation, 8,640 years old, and by the second, 18,720. It is clear that were this the case the first stone would have disappeared long before the last one had been placed, and that the earlier would have looked older than the later ones, whereas the same air of decay is



PILLARS OF THE GREAT GALLERY OF AKÉ.

observable in all. It is more simple and consistent to suppose this monument to have been a thatched gallery which was used for games, meetings, or public ceremonies. Its central position as regards other monuments would seem to bear me out. Is a ruin to be interesting only in ratio of its obscurity and antiquity?

After the pyramid, we visited the ruin known as *Akabna*, "House of Darkness," in which the rooms still standing are

perfectly dark ; for the only light they receive is from a door communicating with other apartments. Here we again find the *boveda*, the corbel roof, the pointed arch observed in previous buildings. The Aké vault is built with large rough blocks, which has caused these monuments to be called cyclopean, an appellation hardly deserved, for cyclopean structures were built with far larger blocks, irregular in shape, yet fitting so well that it would be impossible to introduce the slightest object between the joints, whilst the stones employed in the constructions at Aké are uniform, consisting of thick uncut slabs, with large gaps intervening. This I observed to Mr. Aymé: "You hold that Aké structures were built without mortar or cement, and that no sculpture or decoration of any kind have been found, but I lay down as a principle, that it is altogether impossible, without wishing to deny the very novel features of the phenomenon we are confronted with ; and nothing except the most irrefragable proofs will bring me from my position of total denial, for I am convinced that the builders would not have left structures so important unfinished. If these stones fitted originally, the gaps which are noticeable would be the work of time, and this were to give them an impossible and incredible antiquity, since the slabs are rounded off or sharp at the edges as if quarried yesterday ; further, both in the interior or facing the walls, they are exactly in the same condition, from which I conclude that all were originally laid in cement, and coated over in the usual manner."

Soon after this conversation we visited the ruin called *Knuc*, "Owl's Palace," and on reaching the top of the great pyramid, the first thing I noticed was a very pretty bas-relief of cement, consisting of diamonds and flattened spheres, of

the kind met at Palenque. This relief formed the right side of a frame, topped by figures, traces of which were still discernible; below the projecting cornice was a thick coating of plaster, filling the joints, well smoothed and polished on the surface, and also a coating of paint on the wall.

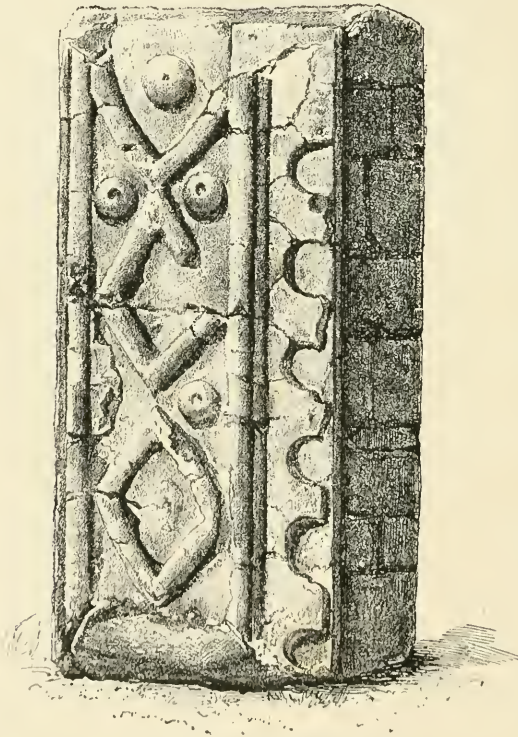
"Well," I said to my companion, Mr. Aymé, "what do you say now?"

"That you were perfectly right."

And, indeed, this discovery proved that the monuments could no longer be considered the work of a different race, a different civilisation, or a hoary antiquity. In effect, their cement decorations are similar to those of the older edifices in Tabasco and many in Yucatan. I shall therefore distinguish the Aké period under three heads: the *cement epoch*, the *cement and cut stone*, and the *cut stone only*, when the builders used only the latter in their decorations, examples of which are to be found in the later edifices at Uxmal and Kabah.

The Aké builders lived in a country where the calcareous layer was taken up in sheets varying from 10 inches to 1 foot 7 inches thick. They used them exactly as they came from the quarry, thus saving great expenditure in labour. When the shell of a structure was run up, it was thickly plastered over, painted, and ornamented with mouldings in relief. This explains at once why the stones on the pillars of the gallery and the blocks of the grand stairway are irregular. The discovery of the bas-relief and cornice filled me with joyful expectation, but although I was indefatigable in visiting the Succuna and other nameless pyramids, I brought to light nothing more of the kind; everything had crumbled away. Here are also found the typical superimposed layers of cement, which we mentioned in various places inhabited by the Toltecs.

To sum up, Aké seems to belong to the early times of the Toltec invasion in Yucatan; an epoch which may not improperly be termed Maya-Toltec, as the civilisation in Tabasco and Chiapas may be termed Tzendal-Toltec, and that of Guatemala, Guatemalto-Toltec.



CEMENTED BAS-RELIEF OF AKÉ.



SQUARE OF TUNKAS.

CHAPTER XVII.

IZAMAL EN ROUTE FOR CHICHEN.

Expedition to Izamal and Chichen-Itza—Brigands—Cacalchen—Market Place—Great Pyramid—Small Pyramid and Colossal Decorative Figures—Cemented Roads—The Convent of the Virgin at Izamal—A Precarious Telegraph—Tunkas—Garrison—Quintana-Roo—An Old Acquaintance—Citas—A Fortified Church—Troops—Opening a Path—Native Entertainment—Arrival at Pisté.

OUR expedition to Izamal and Chichen was a somewhat serious undertaking: we required a large number of hands for our work in mid-forest; we should have to camp out for three weeks at least, removed from all human habitation; finally a military escort, fifty strong, was deemed necessary to secure us against a sudden attack from the revolted natives, respecting whom alarming rumours of pillaging were afloat. Our heavy baggage had been sent on, and armed with twelve-shot Winchesters, and provided with letters from the Governor for

the officers in command of the district garrisons which were to supply the escort, we started on January 4th, travelling over a monotonous, dusty, abominable road. Our drivers, however, were such good whips, that we went over the distance in no time.

There is hardly a soul to be met on the road, save at rare intervals some carts loaded with henequen ; some natives returning from the next village, the women veiling their faces or turning their backs upon us at our approach ; now a company of reserve on their way to the front or homeward-bound, for the borders are strictly guarded against a *coup de main* from the revolted natives.

We stop at Cacalchen ; for our early start, the crisp morning air, and the jolting of the road, have sharpened our appetites. We breakfast under a shaded verandah opening into a central court planted with cocoa-trees. We are waited upon by a very pretty Meztiza, whose fair complexion, rosy mouth, large black eyes, and exquisite figure, are shown to the utmost advantage in her transparent *nipil*, doing her work with simple, quiet grace, while her presence and her bewitching smile seem to light up the whole place. What dish would not have tasted sweet, offered by her shapely hands ?

Izamal, where we arrive at three o'clock, is an important place numbering some five or six thousand souls. It looks beautifully white, for it has just undergone its annual cleaning, when every building is whitewashed in honour of the patron saint.

It has been urged by some writers that the civilisation of Yucatan and Tabasco belonged to a remote past ; but these writers often speak from mere hearsay, accepting everything without the slightest criticism ; their accounts, however valuable, are filled with uncertainties, are often obscure and contradictory,

so that they may be made to square with the idiosyncrasy of all or any particular man. Consequently the difficulties in arriving at the truth are almost insuperable, unless it is one who has visited the regions he writes upon, studied the monuments, collated ethnographical documents, compared the various manners and customs, fitting himself to catch a word or a sentence which from time to time shoots across the darkness of their undigested narratives, and correcting with their help errors with which they abound. But the general neglect by ancient writers of monuments which everywhere met their gaze makes me unjust, while our gratitude is due to such industrious writers as Bernal Diaz, Sahagun, Torquemada, and many more.

Izamal, like many other places in the peninsula, was built on the site of an Indian city; here, as elsewhere, the chief care of the Spaniards was to destroy alike palaces, temples, and written documents, bidding the natives forget their ancient traditions. Landa, who wrote forty-five years after the Conquest (1566), speaks of the edifices at Izamal as twelve in number, adding that the founders were unknown; whilst Lizana, sixty years later (1626), with fewer opportunities for collecting legends, gives their history in full, together with the Indian names and their signification; but unfortunately in his time the monuments had dwindled down to five.

Landa, as we have remarked, says these monuments are of unknown origin, yet in another place he affirms they are the work of the existing race, since he writes: "*Among the remains of monuments which were destroyed are found fragments of human figures and other decorations, such as the natives make even now with very hard cement.*" He further mentions having found in a tomb "*stone ornaments artistically wrought, similar to the currency in present use among the natives.*"

At Merida he demolished an Indian temple, which crowned the upper part of the great mound, giving a ground plan and describing it as "built with square blocks, beautifully carved, and of such height as to produce a feeling of awe in the beholder" (its real height is 80 feet); thus proving the monument to have been entire when he wrote. Nevertheless it is from an assertion such as this that judgment has been passed on the monuments, and from documents like the Perez manuscript that a chronology has been deduced. The monuments are imposing, no doubt, to judge from the few that remain; but we should err if, following Landa and others, we pronounced them "colossal, gigantic, magnificent, to which nothing in the world can be compared."

The whole extent of the Yucatec monuments would not represent in cubic metres the works achieved in Paris during the last twenty-five years; consequently they should be viewed as the unpretending outcome of a semi-civilised people, and this estimate need not lessen their interest, while the mysterious silence which surrounds them forms a void in the history of the human race.

The great mound to the north is called *Kinich-Kakmó*, "The Sun's face with fiery rays," from an idol which stood in the temple crowning its summit. The monument consists of two parts: the basement, nearly 650 feet, surmounted by an immense platform, and the small pyramid to the north. "Great veneration was felt for the idol or deity of *Kinich-Kakmó*, and in times of public calamity, the entire population flocked to this shrine with peace-offerings, when at mid-day a fire descended and consumed the sacrifice, in the presence of the assembled multitude. Then the officiating priest notified the will of the deity whether for good or for evil, and prophesied more or less the secret longings of their hearts: but as they could not always guess aright, it

not unfrequently happened that their expectations were not fulfilled.”*



GREAT PYRAMID, KINICH-KAKMÓ, AT IZAMAL.

Facing this to the south was another great mound, known as *Pbapp-Hol-Chac*, “the House of Heads and Lightning,” the priest’s

* Lizana, “Hist. de Nuestra Señora de Izamal,” published by the Abbé Brasseur.

house, presumably similar to those still standing in various towns of Yucatan. The upper portion of this pyramid was levelled down, and on its lower platform was erected the Franciscan church and convent.

The third pyramid to the east supported a temple dedicated to *Izamat-Ul*, *Izamna*, or *Zamna*, the great founder of the ancient Maya empire. "To him were brought," says Lizana, "the sick, the halt, and the dead, and he healed and restored them all to life by the touch of his hand;" hence the appellation *Kab-Ul*, the Miraculous Hand, applied to him.* He is often represented by a hand only, which recalled him to the memory of his worshippers. His other names are the Strong, the Mighty Hand, the Long-handed Chief, who wrote the code of the Toltecs, and as such has been identified with Quetzalcoatl, with whom he shared the government; he conducting the civil power, whilst Quetzalcoatl, the virgin-born deity, looked after the spiritual.†

"The temple in which these miracles were performed, was much frequented; for this reason four good roads had been constructed, leading to Guatemala, Chiapas, and Tabasco. Traces of them can even now be seen in various places."‡ We also have found marks of a cemented road, from Izamal to the sea facing the island of Cozumel.

Lastly the fourth pyramid to the west, which is shown in our cut of the market-place, had on its summit the palace of *Hunpictok*, "the commander-in-chief of eight thousand flints." On its side near the basement, consisting of stones laid without

* Extract from P. Lizana's "Hist. de Nuestra Señora de Izamal," published by the Abbé Brasseur.

† Diego Landa, chap. ix. p. 57.

‡ Lizana, "Hist. de Nuestra Señora de Izamal," published by the Abbé Brasseur.

mortar, and rounded off at the corners like those of the Aké pyramid, stood the gigantic face reproduced by Stephens, but which has since disappeared. This head is so interesting that



SOUTH SIDE OF HUNPICTOK PYRAMID AT IZAMAL, AFTER STEPHENS.

I cannot deprive the reader of the description given by the American traveller: "It is 7 feet 8 inches high. The features were first rudely formed by small rough stones, fixed in the side of the mound by means of mortar, and afterwards perfected with stucco so hard that it has successfully resisted the action

of air and water for centuries.”* The stone forming the chin alone measures 1 foot 6 inches; the figure has enormous moustachios, and a resemblance may be traced to the gigantic faces in stone at Copan, where the plaster has crumbled away and left the stone bare. The resemblance to the Aké pyramids is remarkable and leads us to conclude that the latter were decorated in the same manner. Here also on the east side is found the figure shown in our cut, from which may be traced the builder's mode of working.

This colossal head is 13 feet high; the eyes, nose, and under-lip were first formed by rough stones coated over with mortar; the ornaments to the right and left were obtained by the same means; the latter are the best preserved, while double spirals, symbols of wind or speech, may be seen, similar to those in Mexico, at Palenque and Chichen-Itza. On the western side of this pyramid, which has been cleared towards the basement, we discovered one of the finest bas-reliefs it has been our fortune to see in Yucatan. Its principal subject is a crouching tiger with a human head and retreating forehead, less exaggerated than those at Palenque, beautifully moulded, and reminding us of the orders of knighthood in which the tiger had the pre-eminence; nor could a better device be imagined for the house of the commander-in-chief at Izamal. To conclude, these documents, which would be a dead letter to one who had not followed the various migrations from north to south, enable us to reconstruct here also a Toltec centre. It may be noted that if numerous monuments are still found in Yucatan, their existence is due to the small number of Spaniards settled in these regions at the time of the Conquest, and more especially to their being at a distance from the centres occupied by the conquerors.

* Stephens, “Incidents of Travels in Yucatan,” tome II. p. 434.

Through the whole length and breadth of Anahuac both monuments and cities have entirely disappeared; for the Spaniards were not satisfied with destroying all that reminded



COLOSSAL HEAD FORMING BASEMENT OF PYRAMID AT IZAMAL.

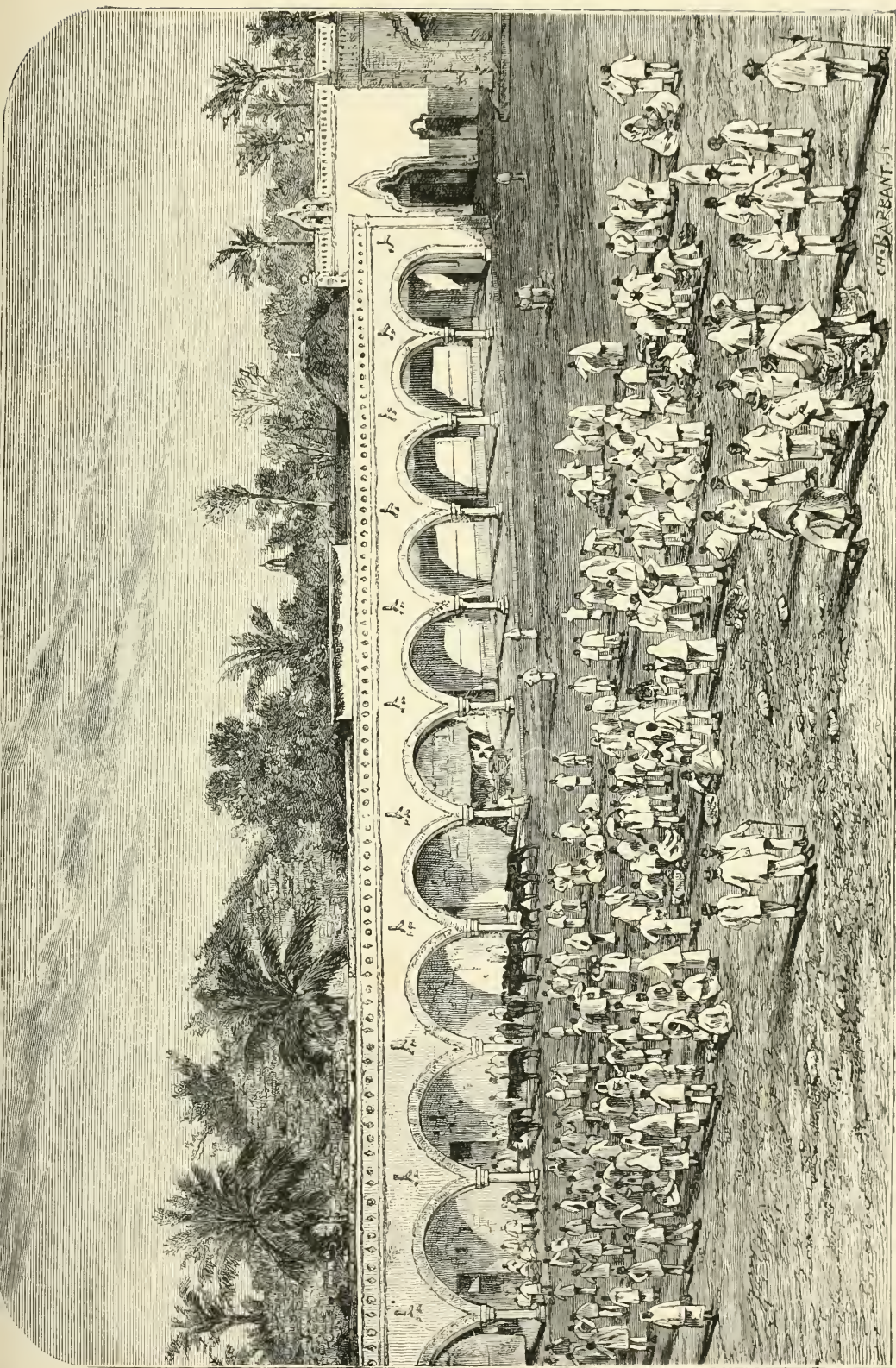
them of a former polity, they were also careful to infuse into their young disciples a profound horror for their former religion, while they trained children to report any word or deed they observed in their parents or priests which savoured of their ancient customs. Thanks to these measures, every-

thing that could recall the past to the rising generation was soon blotted out from the Indian mind. But however dilapidated the monuments we observe at Izamal, they prove that there was here a great population at the time of the Conquest; and this being admitted, it follows that their destruction is comparatively recent, due mainly to civil wars, dating a few years before the arrival of the Spaniards.

As for the Perez manuscript, which was written by a native from memory long after the Conquest, purporting to be the faithful rendering of legends handed down from mouth to mouth, in a particular family, it adds nothing to our knowledge, throws no light on the question which perplexes us. The narrative begins from 144 A.D., and goes on to 1560 A.D.; but is it possible to admit seriously the authority of an account so obtained, extending over so many centuries? At the time of its publication all the natives had preserved was a dubious legend; and traditions fared hardly better with the caciques and nobles fallen from their high estate, than they did with the common people, for "the former were often reduced," says Cogolludo, "to the extreme of poverty; and forty years after the Conquest (1582) the royal descendants of Tutulxiu, and the princely house of Mayapan, were obliged to work for their living like the humblest amongst their ancient subjects."*

This picture, sad as it is, became even worse a few years later, when the conquerors had reduced the whole population to a state of hard bondage. The only difference of any importance between the Perez manuscript and the narratives of Clavigero, Veytia, and Ixtlilxochitl, is in the chronology, which is far too absurd for any serious consideration, for

* Cogolludo, tome i. lib. iv. cap. iii.



MARKET PLACE OF IZAMAL.

CH. BARBANT.

while the latter gives the seventh century as the date of the arrival of the Toltecs at Tula, and their subsequent migration in Central America at the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century; with the former they leave Tula in 144 A.D., and arrive in Yucatan in 217 A.D., nearly five hundred years before the generally accepted date of their arrival at Tula. Moreover he calls Yucatan an island, although the new-comers had penetrated the country through Tabasco and the south without crossing the sea, clearly indicating that it was a peninsula.

The church of Izamal is very fine, but its chief attraction in the eyes of the natives is a statue of the Virgin. Its story runs thus:

A celebrated artist of Guatemala received an order from the towns of Izamal and Merida respectively, for two statues of the Virgin; in their transit, which took place in the rainy season, neither the case containing the images, nor the men conveying them, got a drop of rain. Valladolid, jealous that so small a place as Izamal should possess this fine statue, came in great force and carried it off, but the image proved stronger than all those men put together, for it became so heavy that it had to be abandoned at the outskirts of the little town. The miracle was followed by a great many more, so that the Izamal Virgin was soon the most celebrated in the peninsula, attracting as many pilgrims as did formerly *Kab-Ul*, of the Miraculous Hand.

We set off at five in the morning for Valladolid, to avoid the overpowering heat of the day; indeed, all traffic between May and September in these tropical regions is done by night, for the greater comfort of both man and beast. We watch the sun rise in the east, but far from enlivening the scene, it seems only to bring out in stronger relief the

desolateness of the landscape. A few carts with natives on their way home shivering with the night cold, a wretched tumble-down hamlet called Stilipech, is all we notice on our route; and indeed we have much to do with keeping our seats in these *volan cochés*, which rattle along at so furious a pace on these atrocious roads, as to make us wonder what power keeps them from being smashed to pieces.

I had had suspicion during my stay at Merida as to Yucatan having any postal or telegraphic administration, for a number of my telegrams were left unanswered, and my inquiries were met with the evasive reply that the line was not in good order. That such was the case I could now plainly see for myself. A wire which skirted the wood had indeed been laid, but having no poles or insulators it trusted to fate to get fixed now and again to a branch or a tree, which, bending with the breeze, allowed it to trail among the rocks or get entangled in the brambles. Wonderful to relate, a message sometimes reached its destination; a great step forward as compared to Tabasco, where no sooner is the wire laid than it is purloined by the inhabitants, who, it seems, find it useful. But our *volan* suddenly stops, and the driver draws our attention to an important cenoté known as Xcolac, shaded by beautiful trees and full of fish. On its banks a number of Indians are filling their gourds to the brim, and with simple grace offer us a drink of its cool, fresh pure water. It argues strange apathy in the natives that in a country where water is so scarce, a hamlet or hacienda should not have been erected around it. We re-enter our *cochés* and reach Tumbras, formerly a flourishing place, about eleven o'clock; it was burnt down during the civil wars and has not been rebuilt. We alight before a decent-looking house, having a tienda stocked with salt, tobacco,

wine, liqueurs, preserves, sardines, and American hams. For whom are all these good things? I was going to ask, when I recollected that a garrison is stationed here.

Our host, a fat, red-faced man, receives us with a profusion of smiles, putting "everything in his house at our feet." Warned by sad experience, feeling, moreover, as hungry as schoolboys after a game of cricket, we stammered out for the usual "portion"



CENOTE OF XCOLAC.

in the shortest possible delay, but what was our agreeable surprise to find a *menu* consisting of strong clear soup, a sardine omelette, beefsteak, French beans, wine, English beer, and excellent coffee!

Meanwhile the commander, who had received instructions with regard to our mission, came in just as we were sitting down; he was immediately invited to join our party, which he did with alacrity, for the life of an officer quartered in this out-of-the-way place, without a soul to speak to from year's end to year's end,

whose sole business consists in the morning and evening parades, or giving the order of the day, must be indescribably monotonous and trying in the extreme.

The presence of our *volan* has set the village in motion ; soon a number of people are seen crossing the deserted plaza in our direction : some are old and decrepit, and all look as though they could hardly stand on their rickety legs, for the able-bodied men are in the fields preparing the *milpa*, cleaning the ground for the sowing of Indian corn. They invade the tienda, peering into our room ; the boldest advances with rolling gait, to have a nearer view of our group, delivering himself of a little speech in the Maya tongue, presumably indiscreet, to judge by the amused smiles of the company. The commandant desires him to leave the room, but he refuses, and has to be ejected by the united efforts of two orderlies.

Refreshed with our excellent luncheon, our pleasant chat, and last, not least, a respite from the too lively *coché*, we set out, and do not stop again until we reach Quintana-Roo, sometimes used as a basis by the revolted natives in their expeditions, whence they sallied forth for their *razzias*, carrying off the women, and massacring the men, except in the rare instances when a large ransom might be looked for ; this, however, did not always save the poor wretch, who, his money being paid, was ruthlessly butchered by these savages.

Quintana is about as small a place as can be conceived, consisting of one small fort garrisoned by twelve men, and one house ; in the landlord of the latter I recognise my old guide, who in 1859 accompanied me to Chichen. My old acquaintance is now a prosperous man, with a nice house, a tienda and poultry-yard well stocked, while a comely wife, lovely children, and pretty Meztizas, attend to the business of the household and enliven it. My friend insists on our having some chocolate, and wishes to be again our guide to Chichen. I am delighted, and

with expressions of mutual regard we take leave of this charming family, *en route* for Citas, where we arrive so late in the evening that everybody had given us up, so that nothing had been prepared, and the people did not seem inclined to bestir themselves for us. No house or room was to be had. It was fortunately holiday time; the school-room was placed at our disposal, in which we at once deposited our camp-beds and other paraphernalia. The next thing was how to get something to eat, and we should have gone supperless to bed, if the magistrate and the mayor had not kindly interfered in our behalf, and partly by coaxing, partly by the weight of their authority, induced the people to bring out the contents of their larder.

Here we leave the *volan* for saddle-horses, mules, and *tamenes*, for our next stage is through thick woods right across country. Our preparations take a good deal of time; horses are scarce and have to come some distance, while *tamenes* must be brought down from their extravagant prices before we can think of engaging them. The same difficulties have beset us everywhere; the natives deeming fair game any one so insane or ridiculous as to come from distant lands to view some crumbling stones; of course he has more money than he knows what to do with, and it is only common justice to ease him of some of his surplus. We despatch our men a day in advance to open the way through the woods, while we tarry to witness a *jardana*, native dance, to which an invitation in due form, that we "would honour the same with our presence," has been received.

"What, you dance here?" I exclaimed on first hearing of it; "but you told me that your life and property were continually threatened; that you never knew when you lay down at night whether you would not be massacred by your revolted countrymen, ere another day dawned."

“That’s quite true,” answered my servant, “but we dance for all that, and as often as we have the opportunity. Why should we neglect to cull the few flowerets growing on the short, dreary path of our life?”

I confess that I was not prepared for so much philosophy in such a place, and from such a man, savouring of a *ci-devant* at the time of the Convention rather than of a half-savage.

The streets of Citas might not improperly be called ridges of rock divided by minute precipices, down which, however, a stranger may break his neck. To avoid so great a calamity, we set out holding on to two native guides by means of ropes tied round our waist, for the night is pitch dark, and the distance to the *jardana* some 500 yards.

The house in which the entertainment is given wears a poor appearance. Three huge fires are burning, round which stand women busy with roasting and otherwise preparing the feast with chickens, turkeys, pork, etc.; whilst outside, other women are kneeling before *metates*, or, *comals* in hand, prepare tortillas to be served hot during the whole “fiesta.” A little in front is a thatched barn, lighted by smoking lamps, which forms the ball-room, with benches and chairs against the walls for the ladies, while in the centre the men dancers in white hose, flowing shirt, and loose coloured neckties, are meditating on whom their choice may fall with any chance of success. The whole village, Indians and Meztizos, are here to-night, but hardly any *Ladinos* or whites.

Every traveller who has witnessed these native dances, has described them as entrancing; for my part I confess that I find them devoid of attraction: the performers, without grace or animation, move gravely on one spot, without looking at or touching their partners, going round them as they would a pole, to the sound of very primitive and monotonous music.

"It is an Indian who gives the entertainment," said my friend the judge. "It will last several days, or rather several nights, and cost at least sixty pounds, which to a native is a fortune—ruination in fact—but he will not care, and after him another will be found to take up the ball, and so on to the end of time."

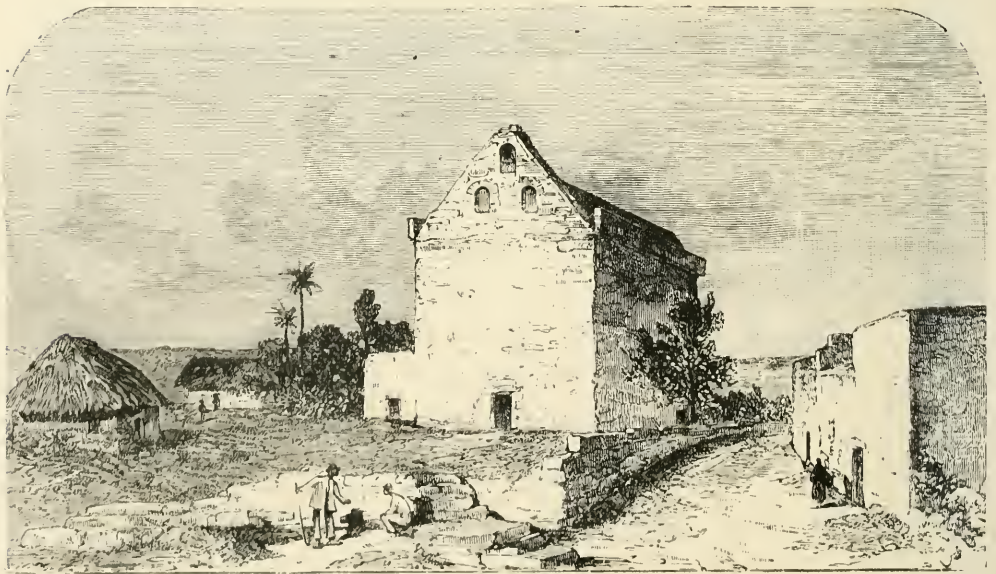
"But what happens afterwards?"

"Oh, nothing happens; they'll go to their *milpas* as before; if the harvest is good they will lay by a little in view of another party when their turn comes round; if it is a bad year, they'll pinch; if a famine, they'll starve. Care never sits behind an Indian, and as for the lessons of experience, they seem incapable of learning them."

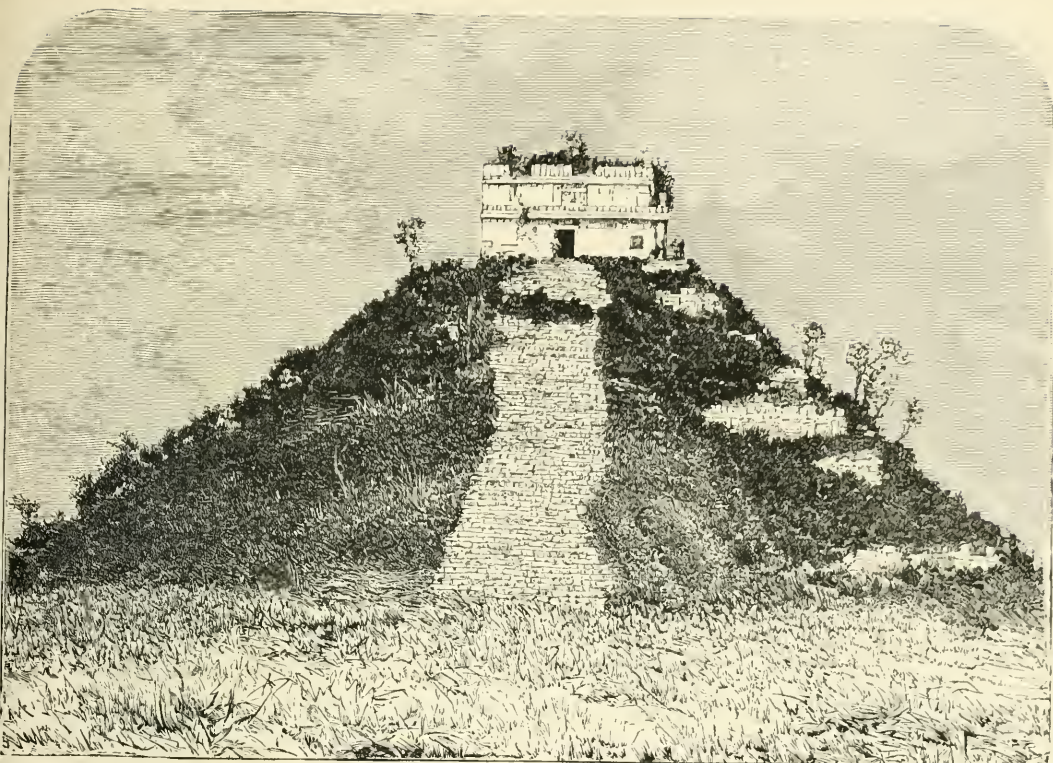
In these entertainments may be traced the customs of the ancient Indians which are unconsciously kept up by their descendants. We read in Landa: "They often spent in one banquet what they had been a long time earning with difficulty. Banquets were of two kinds: those given by the caciques and great nobles to their friends for the mere pleasure of showing their hospitality, when they expected to be asked in return. The table on all such occasions was well provided with meats, game, vegetables, and fruit of every kind, and at the conclusion of the entertainment, the guests were presented with rich dresses and ornaments, when they withdrew after midnight." "If one died before the debt of his obligation had been paid, the duty fell to his family. Next came the occasions when a marriage occurred in a family, or when the illustrious deeds of an ancestor were celebrated by the whole clan. On such occasions the necessity of returning the banquet was not enforced; but if a person belonging to another family had been asked, he was expected to invite them all again when he married."*

* Landa, vol. XXII. p. 125.

There is positively nothing worthy of remark with regard to our road, save here and there a palm or cedar-tree towering like a giant over the thick underwood overrun with flowering lianas, peopled with great sky-blue butterflies, whose wings are tipped with black; for the whole country to the east and south of Citas is a vast scene of desolation. Pisté, where we arrive, stands on the extreme border of the state; it has been so often sacked and burnt by the revolted natives, that the only building left is the church, occupied by a company of twenty-five men. It looks a forsaken, God-forgotten place, a veritable exile for the small garrison quartered here in turn for three months in the year; not that there is any immediate danger, for the natives, who first rose to conquer their liberties, fell to massacring from a spirit of revenge, and now only take the field for the sake of plunder. We have nothing to tempt their cupidity, consequently our escort of fifty men is a measure of prudence rather than of necessity.



CHURCH AND SQUARE, CITAS.



EL CASTILLO OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHICHEN-ITZA.

Chichen-Itza—El Castillo—General Survey—A Maya City—Aguilar—Historical Jottings—Montejo's Expedition—Historians—Their Contradictions—Chichen Deserted—The Conqueror's Retreat—The Nunnery—Impressions and Photographs—Terrestrial Haloes—An Unexpected Visitor—Electric Telegraph—Akab-Sib—Prison—Caracol—Cenotés—Ruined Temples—The Temple of the Sacred Cenoté—Tennis-Court—Monuments Described—Portico—Paintings—Bas-reliefs—New Analogy—The Tlalocs of Chichen and of the Uplands—Market-place—End of Our Labours—Col. Triconis.

THE ruins of Chichen are two miles east of Pisté, and were used as pasture for the cattle of the inhabitants, who at stated periods had the woods cut down, when the monuments were easily distinguished. It was a favourite place, to the prejudice of the

palaces and the sculptures, which were made the butt by the visitors to shoot at; but since the destruction of Pisté, nature again reigns supreme; every sign of the buildings has disappeared, and the jungle has become so impassable, that twenty men were required to open the old path.

This was not my first visit to Chichen, nevertheless my emotion was profound on beholding again the gigantic outline of El Castillo, which we had decided beforehand should be our headquarters, as from its elevated position it offered many strategical advantages, which would secure us against surprise. It was with considerable difficulty that we climbed the steps, which are steep and completely invaded by a vigorous vegetation; as for our great quantity of baggage, none but nimble, sure-footed natives could have succeeded in hauling it up on to the platform of the monument.

Our next thought was how to dispose of ourselves. The interior of El Castillo consists of a rectangular corridor, running along two-thirds of the edifice, pierced east, south, and west by three large apertures, and a gallery giving access to a great hall closed in on every side. We very stupidly gave up the latter to our men, with the idea that we should be cooler and have more air in the open gallery, not taking into consideration that at this altitude, whichever way the wind blew, it would sweep in upon us in fearful blasts, causing perpetual sneezing, coughing, and freezing the very life out of us.

The day was spent unpacking and classifying, and at supper-time we discovered that our cook, who was to have come from Valladolid, had failed us; food we had in tins, but no water, having left our cantaros at Citas, so that we were obliged to go without soup, coffee, or our evening tub.

It may seem unworthy to have been put out by such trivial details with the grand spectacle we had before us: a

glorious moon had risen, sailing on her course with her brilliant retinue of scintillating stars, illuminating the vast wooded expanse, like a boundless, heaving ocean on a calm day ; fragments of walls, mounds, eminences, shrouded in a sombre vegetation, were distinctly visible, which I pointed out one by one to my companions who, unlike myself, beheld them for the first time. El Castillo occupies nearly the centre of the ruins ; below it to the east was the Market-place, and two small palaces which belonged to it ; to the north, a stately but ruinous building, the cenoté and the temple attached ; to the north-west, the famous Tennis-court ; to the west and south-west, the Chichan-Chob, the Caracol and the other cenoté, the Nuns' Palace, the Akab-Sib ; and farther south, the hacienda, which has long been abandoned.

We were conversing in subdued tones of the mysterious past of this dead city, which mayhap our studies and explorations would bring to life again ; all was hushed, and the death-like silence was only broken at regular intervals by the cry of our sentinels ; and these very cries carried us back to the far-gone days, when the city was perhaps similarly guarded against a sudden inroad from her jealous neighbours.

The morning effects of light and shade were no less beautiful ; the broad level wrapped in a transparent mist, pierced here and there by the pyramids and the wooded eminences, looked like a whitening sea interspersed with green islets ; while the horizon was gilded with the brightness of the rising sun, who seemed to create, to raise suddenly into life all the objects touched with his golden wand ; presently, like a mighty giant he tore asunder and burnt up the white vapour, and lit up the whole sky.

Meanwhile, our unpacking and our plans for the immediate future are almost completed ; the cantaros have come, and as

water is one of our great requirements, as the cenoté is at some distance, and there are ninety steps to our abode, ten men are told off for it; other ten are set to cleaning the place, while an equal number will open up the paths and clear the monuments we wish to explore.

Here it may be remarked that Yucatan had centres rather than cities; for the groups of dwellings and palaces we find resemble in no way our cities of the present day, although they are continually compared to Spanish places, notably Sevilla, by the conquerors. They consist everywhere of temples and palaces, either of the reigning prince or caciques, of public edifices scattered about, apparently at random, covering a vast area, with cemented roads and gardens intervening, while the avenues were occupied by the dwellings of dependents and slaves. This is borne out by Landa, who says: "Before the arrival of the Spaniards the aborigines lived in common, were ruled by severe laws, and the lands were cultivated and planted with useful trees. The centre of their towns was occupied by the temples and squares, round which were grouped the palaces of the lords and the priests, and so on in successive order to the outskirts, which were allotted to the lower classes. The wells, necessarily few, were found close to the dwellings of the nobles, who lived in close community for fear of their enemies, and not *until the time of the Spaniards* did they take to the woods."*

These last words plainly indicate the sudden desertion of Indian cities at the coming of the Spaniards.

The word used by Landa is *pueblo*, "hamlet," meaning, perhaps, town; at all events, it shows that even after the breaking up of the Maya empire (from great provinces) into

* Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. xv. p. 91.

small independent principalities, the people had preserved their ancient customs. Chichen-Itza, "the mouth of the wells," from the two cenotés around which the town was built, is more recent than Izamal or Aké, but older than Uxmal, although it belongs, like the latter, to the "cut stone period."

Our information respecting it is of the vaguest, and Aguilar and Montejo are equally silent on the subject, while E. Ancona is of opinion that the greater portion of the writings and documents treating of the conquest of Yucatan have been lost, or at any rate have escaped our investigations. Nevertheless, we find in a letter of Montejo to the King of Spain, April 13th, 1529, published by Brinton, of Philadelphia, from the unpublished documents and archives of the Indies, this remarkable passage: "This region is covered with great and beautiful cities and a dense population" ("ciudades muy frescas," recent, new). Could he have expressed more clearly that the cities he had visited were lately built? Can these places have disappeared and left no trace? Who were the builders of the noble ruins that have filled with admiration every one who has visited them?

Unfortunately, whether we consult the traditions collected too late, or the Perez manuscript with its doubtful dates, we find no certain data to go upon; in the latter we read that the Toltecs travelled in 360 from Bacalar (Ziyancan) to Chichen; left it in 452 to return in 888, when they remained until 936; that a governor of Chichen was defeated in 1258 by a prince of Mayapan, etc.; in fact, a mere roll of obscure names without any meaning. If we would find an ascertained historical fact, we must turn to Cogolludo and Landa, who wrote from 1420 to 1460, where the Chichimec exodus is recorded, corresponding to the capture and destruction of Mayapan.

The cause of this emigration (or elopement, since there was

a lady in the case) is thus told by Cogolludo: "A king of Chichen, called Canek (a generic name of the sovereigns of the Iztaes), fell desperately in love with a young princess, who, whether she did not return his affection, or whether she was obliged to obey a parent's mandate, married a more powerful Yucatec cacique. The discarded lover, unable to bear his loss, moved by love and despair, armed his dependents and suddenly fell upon his successful rival; when the gaiety of the feast was exchanged for the din of war, and amidst the confusion the Chichen prince disappeared, carrying off the beautiful bride. But conscious that his power was less than his rival's, and fearing his vengeance, he fled the country with most of his vassals." *

Thus runs the legend; the historical fact is that the inhabitants of Chichen did emigrate, and did establish in the Peten lagoons, one hundred leagues to the south, a little principality with Tayasal for its capital, seen by Cortez in his journey to Honduras, and brought under the Spanish sway as late as 1696. That a whole population should abandon their native city, is an example of the facility with which these peoples moved from one place to another at a moment's notice; nevertheless, we cannot accept the reasons given by Cogolludo for this migration, so little in accordance with the deep-seated love of the Mayas for their country. It is more likely that one or a series of calamities incident to a primitive race, such as war, pestilence, famine, more or less periodical among the aborigines, was the true cause of their migration.

One thing is clear, that Chichen was inhabited scarcely sixty years before the Conquest, when her monuments were entire; and it is equally clear that a city possessed of two considerable cenotés, so important in a country without water, was not left

* Cogolludo, tome i. lib. iv. cap. xiv. Campeche Edition, 1842.

uninhabited, and that the vacuum left by the exodus was soon filled up, the city preserving its normal existence down to the time of the Spaniards. I am well aware that this kind of evidence will not suit people fond of the marvellous, yet the paucity of documents allows us only a tentative theory, but it will be our care to collect probabilities in such vast numbers, knitting them into a cumulative whole by a patient comparison of monuments, sculptures, bas-reliefs, customs, arms, and public ceremonies, so as to make the evidence absolute. Had Aguilar, who was wrecked and made prisoner on this coast, and lived for nearly eight years as factotum of a powerful cacique, been more observant, we might have a graphic and thorough description of the public and private life among the Mayas; but like the rest of his countrymen, his ideas were turned into quite a different channel, so much so that he has not even recorded the name of the place where later Cortez found him. Ancona tells us that the conquest of Yucatan was hastened by Aguilar, who, when in Mexico with Cortez, persuaded Montejo that "the region was fertile and covered with magnificent monuments"—words of paramount importance, since Aguilar could not have mentioned them in such terms, had they been in ruins or hid away in the woods. It may also be inferred from the incessant mutual warfare of the caciques, that the country had lost its unity and was split up into several provinces, which Herrera says were "eighteen in number covered with stately edifices."* According to the same authority Montejo had a return of the whole population taken, that he might apportion them among his followers, when every one received no less than two or three thousand.† This, however, is obviously a gross exaggeration, for supposing the 400 soldiers of Montejo to have dwindled down to 300,

* Herrera, "Hist. Gen.," Decade IV. lib. x. cap. ii. † *Ibid.* lib. vii. cap. iv.

the mean population of the district would have amounted to 750,000, which is quite impossible.* At all events, the Spaniards occupied Chichen-Itza for two years, but nothing is known of their doings, for Montejo was no writer, nor did he, like Cortez, have chroniclers to record his deeds. At first the submission of the natives was complete ; but after a time they rallied from the stupor into which the unparalleled success of the Spaniards had plunged them, and tiring of ministering to the insatiable wants of the Spanish marauders, who consumed in one day what would have kept in comfort a native family for a month, they disappeared, and the Spaniards were soon reduced to foraging in distant villages. This gave rise to daily skirmishes and a more active hatred on the part of the Indians against the foreigners, until at last exasperated, relying moreover on their numerical strength, they came in great numbers and laid siege to Chichen, during which the Spaniards lost 150 of their number, while the rest were all covered with wounds. In this strait, Montejo, despairing of holding the place much longer, determined to evacuate it ; this it was not easy to do, for the whole country round was occupied by the Indians ; but a pitch-dark night seemed to favour their flight : Montejo took the precaution of having the horses' hoofs muffled, not to arouse the natives' suspicions respecting their movements, while he left a dog tied to a pole beneath a piece of meat with a bell attached, which the animal rang every time he tried to reach the prey, thus keeping the Indians in the full belief that the enemy was entrenched behind the walls. Only on the morrow did the natives find out their mistake ; they gave instant but unavailing pursuit, for the Spaniards had several hours' start of them and were able to reach the territory of a friendly cacique, not far from their own ships.

* Landa says nearly the same.

To return to our excavations, "El Palacio de las Monjas," or Nuns' Palace, is one of the most important monuments at Chichen-Itza, and possesses a greater number of apartments than any other. Whether the name is due to this circumstance, or from its traditionary appellation, is uncertain; but we know from Mexican writers that it was the custom among the Aztecs to dedicate girls of noble birth to the service of the gods, on their attaining the age of twelve or thirteen. Some remained there until they were about to be married; some few took perpetual vows; others, on account of some vow they had made during sickness, or that the gods might send them a good husband, entered the Nunnery for one, two, three, or four years. They were called deaconesses or sisters; they lived under the superintendence of staid matrons of good character, and upon entering the convent, each girl had her hair cut short. They all slept in one dormitory, and were not allowed to undress before retiring to rest, that they might always be ready when the signal was given to rise. They occupied their time with weaving and embroidering the tapestry and ornamental work of the temple. They rose in the night to renew the incense in the braziers, a matron leading the procession; the maidens with eyes modestly cast down filed up to the altar, and returned in the same manner; they fasted often, and were required to sweep the temples and keep a constant supply of fresh flowers on the altars. They did penance for the slightest infringement of their religious rules by pricking their tongues and ears with the spines of the maguey plant. Death was the punishment of the Mexican maiden who violated her vow of chastity.*

* Sahagun, Appendix to book II. p. 196; book VI. chaps. xxxix. to xl.

It has been supposed, from the latter custom, that an order of Vestals, similar to those in Rome, existed in America, but the analogy is more apparent than real. According to Clavigero, priesthood was not binding for life among the Mayas. Of the different male and female religious orders, those dedicated to Quetzalcoatl deserve particular mention; their members had to submit to the strictest observances, but in compensation the people paid them almost divine honours, whilst their power and influence were boundless. Their chief or superior bore the name of Quetzalcoatl, and never walked abroad except to visit some royal personage.* Thus the Nunnery may very well have been both a convent and a priestly abode. It is not a considerable pile, the façade measuring only some 29 feet by 19 feet 6 inches high, while its grotesque, heavy ornamentation reminds us in its details of a Chinese carving. The base up to the first cornice is occupied by eight large superimposed idols, and four of these figures are enclosed within two very salient cornices. The door is crowned with a medallion representing a cacique or priest with the usual head-dress of feathers, the inscription of the palace and stone spires, some of which have entirely disappeared, while the outline of the rest is much defaced. The whole length of the frieze of the north façade has a row of similar gigantic heads, bearing the general characteristics of the ornamentation observable throughout this structure. The Nunnery is typical of the Toltec calli, of which we gave a drawing in our chapter on Tula. The left wing is but 26 feet wide, by 13 feet deep, and about 32 feet high; it consists of three cornices, with two friezes intervening in which the same designs are repeated; the first two high-reliefs represent

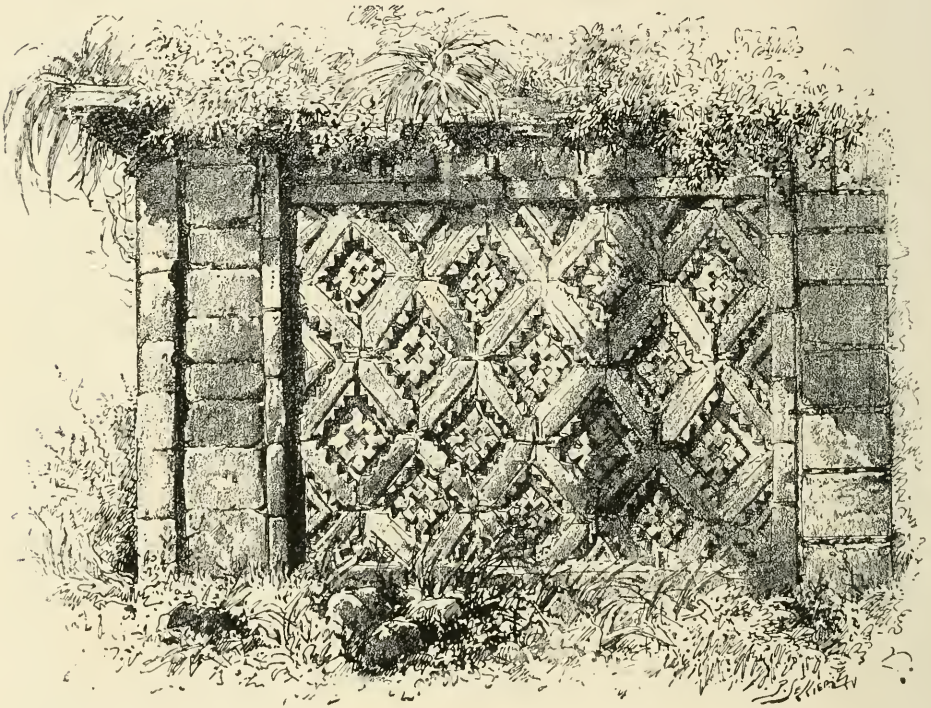
* Clavigero, tome i. lib. vii. pp. 165, 166, 167.

stooping figures, one having his body locked in a tortoise shell, while the centre and the sides of the frieze are decorated with grotesque figures like those of the main façade, which, with small variations, are the same throughout the peninsula. As we have seen in a former chapter, these monstrous masks have been called elephants by Waldeck and others, who wished to claim a fabulous antiquity for these monuments, but the types they most resemble are the Japanese or Chinese. Here, as at Palenque, the upper portion of the wall is ornamented so as to enhance the effect of height.

The main body of the Nunnery rests on a perpendicular pyramid, the platform of which is occupied by a solidly constructed building, intersected with small apartments having two niches facing each other, traversed by a corridor running from east to west of the pyramid. Over this is a smaller structure or third story. The first platform is reached by a steep, broad stairway 50 feet wide, which continues with additional steps to the second platform, where the apartments of the ruined building were but cells. The ornamentation of the first story differs from that of other buildings at Chichen; it consists of small sunk panels, having in the centre a large rose-like device, framed with exquisitely moulded stones. The lintels, likewise of stone, were covered with sculptures and inscriptions now fallen into decay; we could only collect three, and even these are much defaced. In this building are curious traces of masonry out of character with the general structure, showing the place to have been occupied at two different epochs.

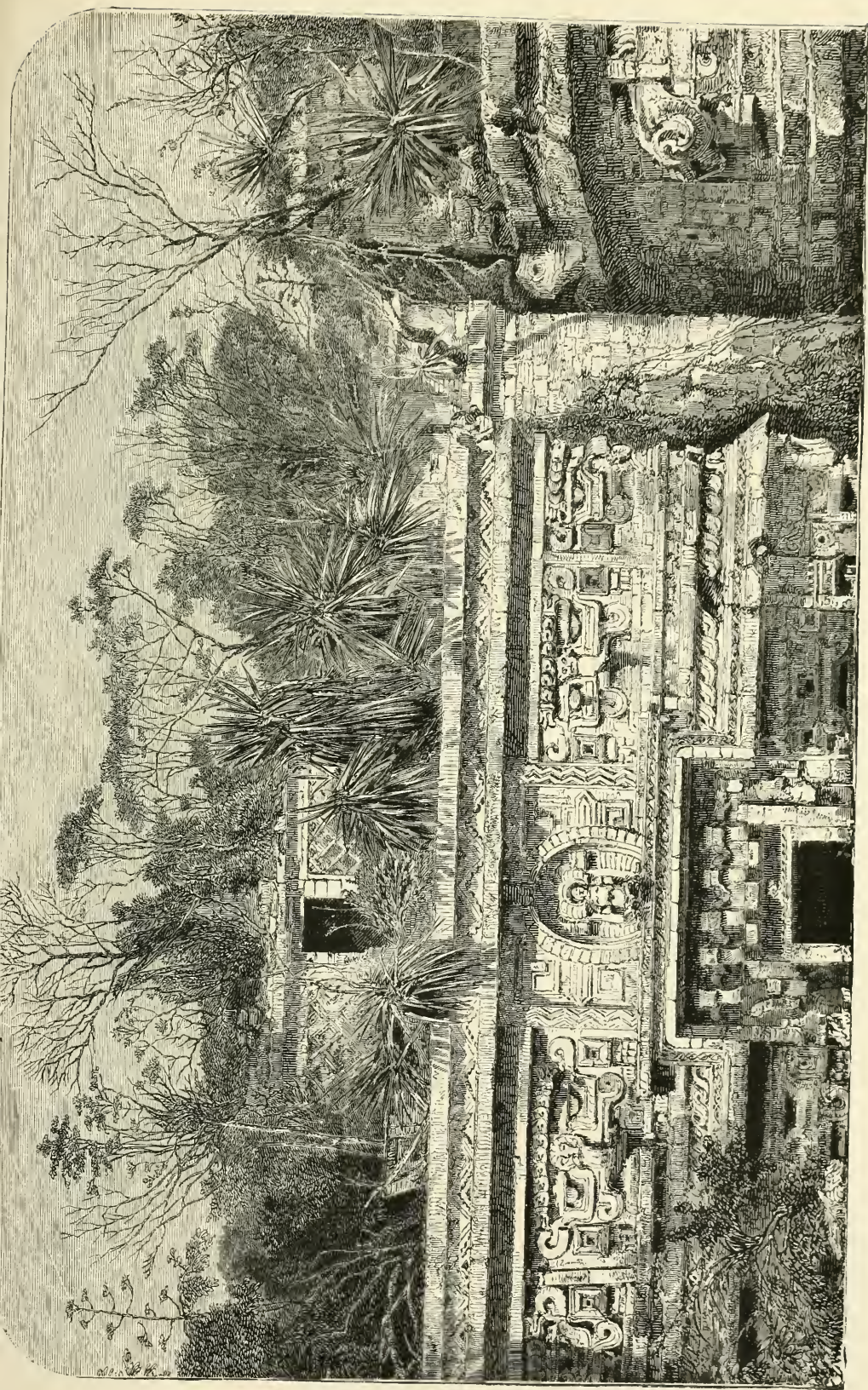
This second construction, or rather restoration, was effected with the materials of the ancient building, as is seen in the fragments of sculptured stones which in the later construction are identical with those of the first, save that they were put up haphazard, so that the systematic ornamentation of the

older structure is no longer reproduced, but in places a thick plaster coating was laid over the whole. The rebuilding may have been the work of the aborigines, since we know that Chichen was abandoned and reoccupied towards the middle of the fifteenth century; or, more likely still, the clumsy restoration may have been the work of the Spaniards during their



ORNAMENTATION OF THE UPPER STORY OF THE NUNNERY, CHICHEN-ITZA.

sojourn in the city, when the Nunnery, from its elevated position, constituted a valuable fortress. Traces of their passage are observable in various other buildings, notably in the Castillo, where their natural fanaticism, coupled with their ignorance, caused them to see in the portraiture of the national and religious life of the Mayas, representations of the devil. This could not be suffered to remain, and as they were unable to demolish the temples and palaces in which they lived, they whitewashed



MAIN FAÇADE OF THE NUNNERY OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

the ornamentation, in order that their eyes might not be constantly offended by the subjects therein represented.

We try with small success to undo their savage work by means of daggers, brushes, and repeated washes, taking up much time, but in most cases the relief is lost to science, being much too defaced to allow us to take squeezes. The idea that the chiefs who erected these monuments were the authors of their defacement is too absurd for serious consideration.

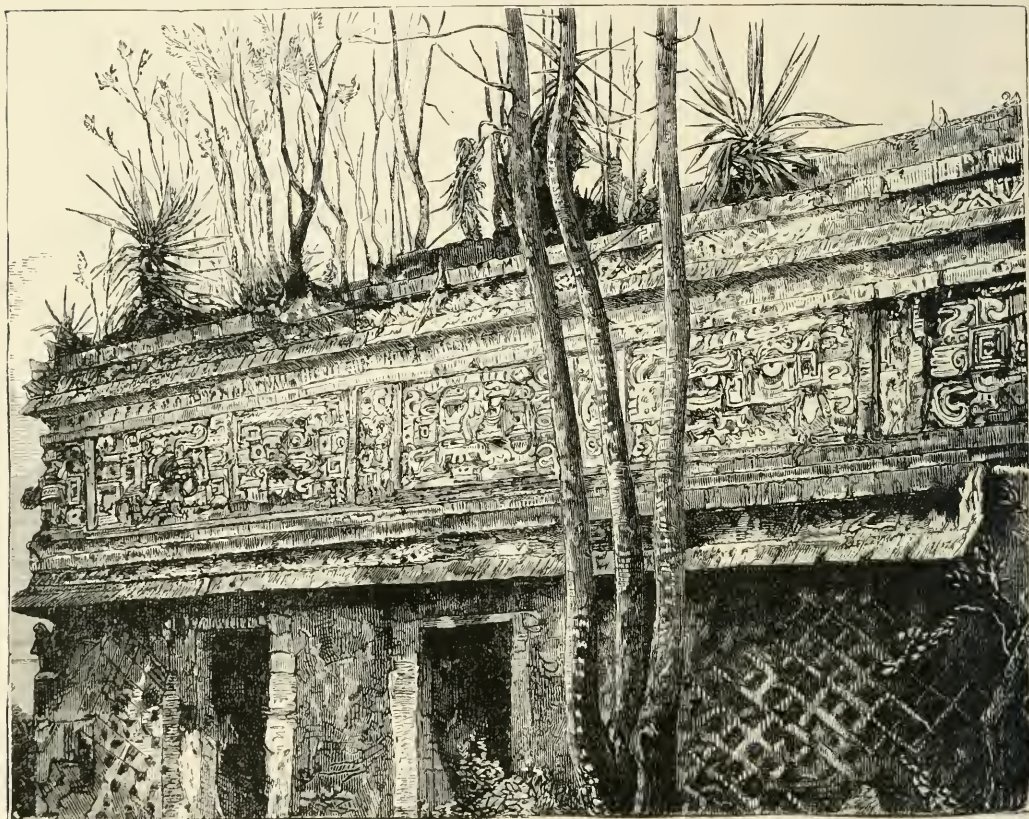
The Castillo, or rather temple,* is reared on a pyramid, facing north and south, and is the most interesting monument at Chichen; its four sides are occupied with staircases, facing the cardinal points. Our drawing shows the western façade. The base of the pyramid measures 175 feet; it consists of nine small esplanades, narrowing towards the top, supported by perpendicular walls, and terminates in a structure about 39 feet on one side by 21 feet high. The upper platform is 68 feet above the level of the plain, having a flight of ninety steps, 39 feet wide, leading up to it.

The name of El Castillo (the fortress), given to this building is appropriate enough; since throughout Central America, temples, in times of war, became real strongholds, on whose gigantic terraces the last desperate conflict was waged against an invading and victorious foe. The struggle might last some time, but was always attended with heavy loss, for each terrace had to be carried against men resolved to die. In the assault on the great temple in Mexico, the Spaniards were several times repulsed before they could get possession of the four esplanades of the pyramid; and when these were taken a fierce encounter followed on the upper platform, which

* That it was a temple may be inferred from Landa, sec. vi. p. 34, where he says that the main edifice at Chichen was called Cukulcan, after a prince who had come from the west.

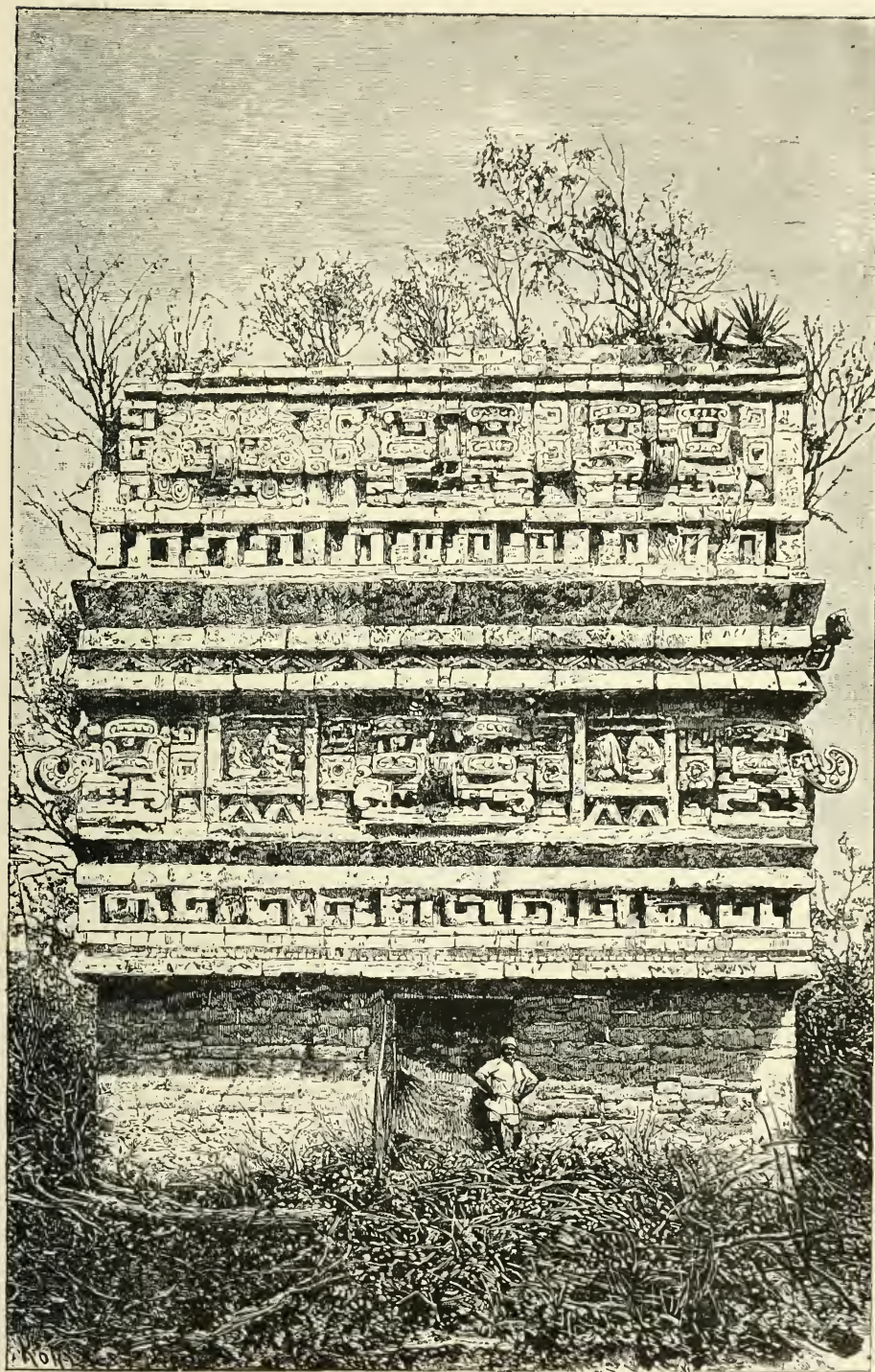
only ended with the utter annihilation of the Aztecs, who were either slaughtered on the spot or hurled down the sides of the pyramid.

The only decoration of the western and southern sides consists in two beautiful cornices, while the interior of the long



NORTHERN FAÇADE OF THE NUNNERY OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

corridor shows no trace of ornamentation, save over the doors, where gigantic warriors are sculptured. The principal or northern façade must have been very striking when Landa saw it in 1560. Our photograph shows its dilapidated condition, but it can easily be reconstructed. It consists of a portico supported by two massive columns connected by wooden lintels, resembling



LEFT WING OF THE NUNNERY OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

that in the Nunnery ; this portico gives access to a gallery which occupies the whole width of the building. A large room, which must have been the sanctuary, is entered by the only opening out of the gallery, while two pillars with square capitals supported a double corbel vault. Here the stairway was wider, and on each side, forming a balustrade, is a gigantic plumed serpent, whose head and protruding tongue run down the balustrade. All these columns, pillars, and wooden lintels, are covered with sculptures and bas-reliefs, the impressions of which kept us closely at work for several days.

As in Mexico, Palenque, and Tula, there were no doors properly so called at Chichen, and no traces of hinges are found ; but a bamboo or wickerwork screen was suspended across the entrance, and secured at night with a bar. The inner rooms were divided off by hangings, which probably also served to cover the windows. We notice everywhere the small holes in the pillars into which the bars fitted.

Landa mentions the two serpents of the grand staircase, and that the corridor was probably used for burning perfumes : "Over the door is a kind of coat-of-arms sculptured in stone, which I could not read. Extending round this edifice is a series of solid constructions ; the intervening distances are coated with cement in perfect condition, *which looks quite new*, so hard was the mortar in which it was laid."* These stucco layers are facsimiles of those at Tula and Teotihuacan, and characteristic of the Toltecs. In the three centuries that have elapsed since the bishop visited these monuments, vegetation has completely over-run them, but it was not so in his time.

It was in this temple that the striking analogy between the

* Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. xlii. p. 343.

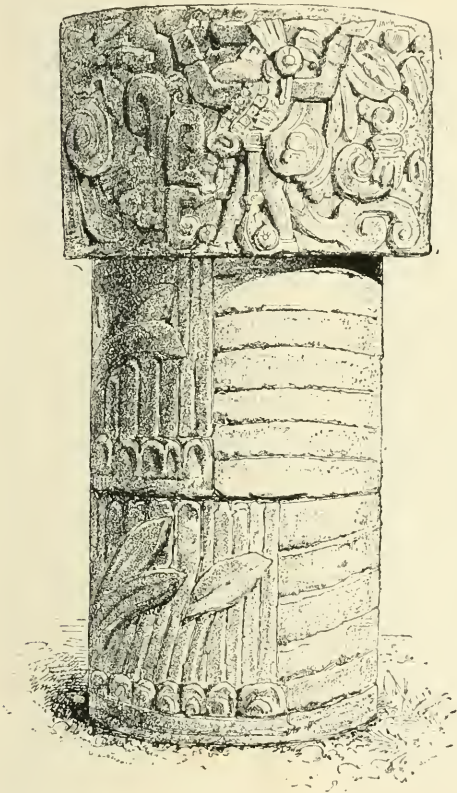
sculptures and the bas-reliefs of the plateaux with those at Chichen was first revealed to us; and since the dates of the



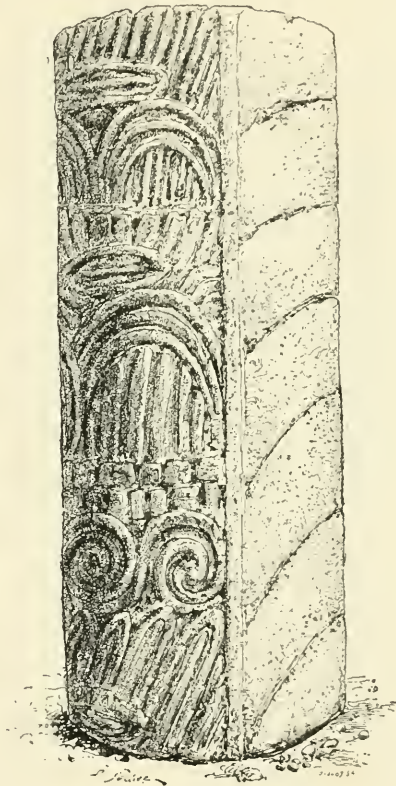
FAÇADE OF EL CASTILLO, CHICHEN-ITZA.

Toltec emigrations are known, we can fix approximately the age of these monuments. We know, on the other hand, that the Aztec civilisation was but a reflex directly derived from the Toltecs, so that in some of their manifestations the two civilisa-

tions must resemble each other; from all which it may be seen that these monuments are both Toltec and recent. The balustrade on the grand staircase consists of a plumed serpent like those forming the outer wall of the temple in Mexico; an emblem of Quetzalcoatl, a deity common to the Toltecs, the



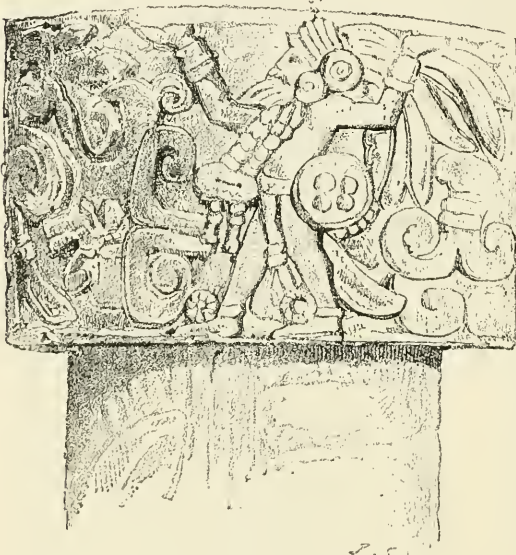
TOLTEC COLUMN IN THE CASTILLO.



TOLTEC COLUMN AT TULA.

Aztecs, and the Mayas. He is often found on Yucatec buildings. In Mexico, a serpent biting his tail was a favourite design with the Aztecs as a frieze to their houses, or over their entrances, and this we shall also observe at Uxmal. Further, the two columns of the temple façade furnish a still more striking example: the bases represent two serpents' heads, whilst the shafts were ornamented with feathers, proving that the temple

was dedicated to Cukulcan (Quetzalcoatl). These shafts are almost an exact reproduction of a Toltec column we unearthed at Tula, as seen in our cuts. The two columns are found three hundred leagues from each other, separated by an interval of several centuries; but if, as we firmly believe, the Tula column is Toltec, the other must be so too, for it could not be the result of mere accident. I have only compared the shafts, for the simple reason that the Tula column has no capital.



YUCATEC CAPITAL AT CHICHEN-ITZA.

The bas-relief on the capital of the other consists of a standing figure with upraised arms supporting the entablature; he wears large bracelets, huge feathers form his head-dress, his feet are covered with shoes fastened on the instep by a leather knot, a collar of precious stones is around his neck, a richly embroidered

maxtli falls to the ground, and he wears the long flowing beard characteristic of Quetzalcoatl.

The two bas-reliefs given opposite are from pillars in the sanctuary. They represent figures in gala costumes, one of which is distinguished by a long beard, and all have the aquiline nose ascribed to the Toltecs. These pillars are occupied by three bas-reliefs, a large one in the centre and two smaller at each side of it. The central relief is a life-size figure of a priest, to judge from the total absence of

arms about all the figures on these pillars. The caryatides on the smaller reliefs, notably the lower one, have double spirals over the mouth, presumably a symbol of wind and speech. We noticed in a former chapter this spiral about Quetzalcoatl on the outer relief of the altar in the Temple of the Cross at Palenque. All these caryatides represent long-bearded men, whose type is identical with those on the Tula relief, as may be seen by the most superficial comparison of the two. But is the spiral an emblem of speech? That it is so may be assumed from the upper caryatid, which only supporting the entablature has no spiral about the mouth, while the lower one not only bears aloft the central figure and the edifice, but it seems to carry,



DOOR-POSTS IN THE CASTILLO, CHICHEN-ITZA.

to create and breathe life into the whole, as the emblem of civilisation. At least so it struck us when we looked at these bearded figures which support the pillars, and saw the symbolical sign of quickening speech around the mouth of each, and considered that the Toltecs were the builders of these monuments, which they reared by their mighty word, in accordance with their pacific and civilising character, as described by Herrera and

Landa. I am well aware that this assumption rests on no scientific basis, nevertheless I hope to bring so many data in its favour as to make it highly probable. The most remarkable feature about the relief on the capital is its striking resemblance to the caryatides in high relief found on the terrace and façade of Angkor-Thom's palace, given by Francis Garnier;* in both the same attitude and dress are observable; the latter consists of the *patoi* with the Cambodians, and the *maxtli* with the Toltecs; while the sculpture is primitive in both, the only difference being in the relief.

Our excursions in these impenetrable woods, our ascents and descents of the pyramid, the arduous work attending the taking of squeezes, made our life very harassing; it could have been more easily borne had we been able to sleep, but the scorching days were succeeded by icy-cold nights, which kept us awake, so that we rose in the morning more unrefreshed and more tired than when we turned in for the night.

Some compensation we had in our walks round the pyramid, beguiling the time we could not sleep with a cigar, contemplating the fine starry nights and sometimes the lunar rainbows so rarely seen; or we watched the broad shadow of the pyramid cast athwart the white haze shrouding the plain, fringed by an immense brilliant corona, which seemed to float in space. Never had I gazed on anything so curious and fantastic as this terrestrial halo; and if the ancient worshippers of Cukulcan ever witnessed the phenomenon, they must have deemed it little short of miraculous.

We were still without a cook; for Julian was so atrociously bad that I kept him at the squeezes, taking the cooking ourselves in turn, which wasted much valuable time. One

* Garnier, "Voyage d'Exploration dans l'Indo-Chine," tome I. chap. iv. p. 71.

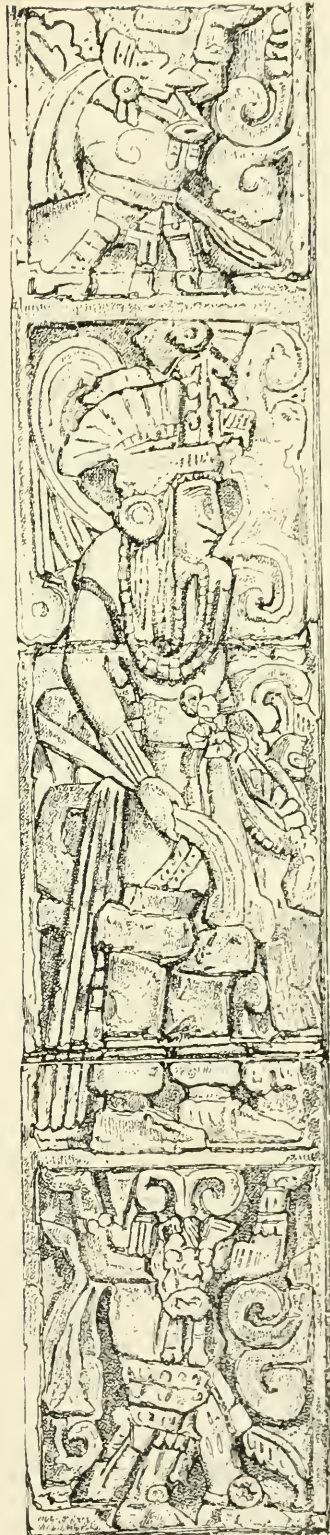
evening, after everybody had gone to rest, I was sitting alone writing my impressions, my head full of the ruins and the people who inhabited them. I suddenly looked up, to see standing before me a lovely maiden more like an apparition than a mortal being. Was this the shade of a Maya princess who had returned to the scenes of her former life, conjured up by my imagination? Meanwhile the beauteous figure stood looking and smiling at me. I was amazed, speechless, hardly daring to break the spell, when a third figure stood out from the dark entrance, in whom I recognised the commandant of Pisté.

"You are surprised at our visit," he said.

"Rather, especially at this hour, and in such a night."

"Time is of no account when you wish to serve a friend; I heard that you required a cook, I brought you mine, that's all."

"A cook!" I ejaculated to myself. What a fall! my Indian princess a cook! I looked at her again, and I could not believe that so much youth and beauty were put to such menial occupation. I wondered at



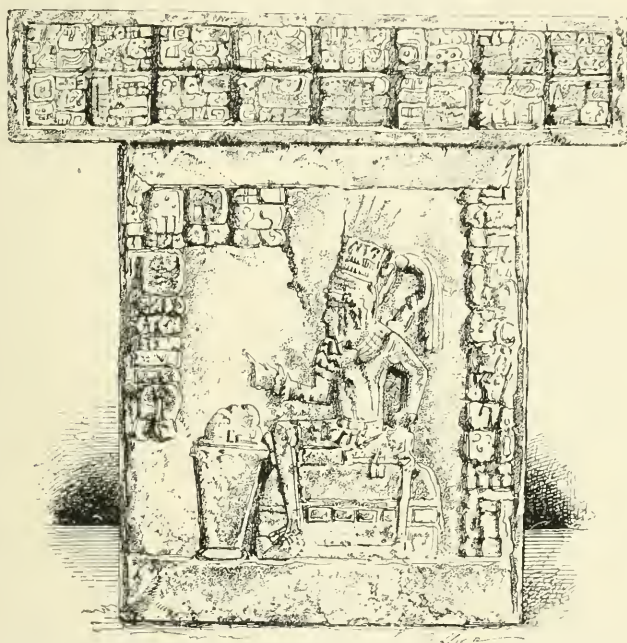
BAS-RELIEFS FROM PILLARS OF SANCTUARY OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

the commandant's self-abnegation. I was somewhat embarrassed, nevertheless, as to where I should put her. I called up Julian to prepare a bed for her, but as he was not easily roused, I had time to reflect that with a hundred men about me, El Castillo was no fitting place for a young girl. I was profuse in my acknowledgments to the commandant, observing that as nothing was ready, it would perhaps be better to put off her coming for a day or two, apologising for the trouble they had taken in coming through the woods and having to climb the pyramid in such a pitch-dark night. He knew what I meant. I slipped a coin in the girl's hand, as she held a bottle towards me. "Drink," said the officer; "it is Josepha's present to you." I did so, while Josepha merely put her lips to the bottle. We shook hands, and my two visitors disappeared in the night. The draught was *Staventum*, a strong spirit, which made me light-headed, and in a fit of somnambulism I wandered about, spouting poetry at the top of my voice, on the very edge of the pyramid, whence I was fortunately removed, without any further result than to awake the next day with a splitting headache. Our long-expected cook arrived at last, and she was so old, and such a fright, that it relieved me of all fear on her account.

Akab-Sib, "writing in the dark," is a modern appellation, due to a bas-relief found on the lintel of an inner door at the extremity of the building. The cut we give is a copy of our photograph. We can give no explanation respecting this relief. The figure it represents is sitting before a vase full of indistinct objects, with outstretched arm and forefinger pointed, whether in question or command is uncertain—not much for the imagination to go upon. We will restrict ourselves to pointing out the analogy of the characters in the inscriptions with those at Palenque. The structure consists of eighteen rooms, reared

on a plain pyramid, with a stairway to the east, without any ornamentation.

The Caracol is a round building, 22 feet in diameter, with a double inner corridor and a central pillar; it is a kind of tower, used probably for civil or religious ceremonies, for we have found this kind of structure at Cozumel and in all the great centres.



BAS-RELIEFS WITH INSCRIPTIONS, AKAB-SIE PALACE AT CHICHEN-ITZA.

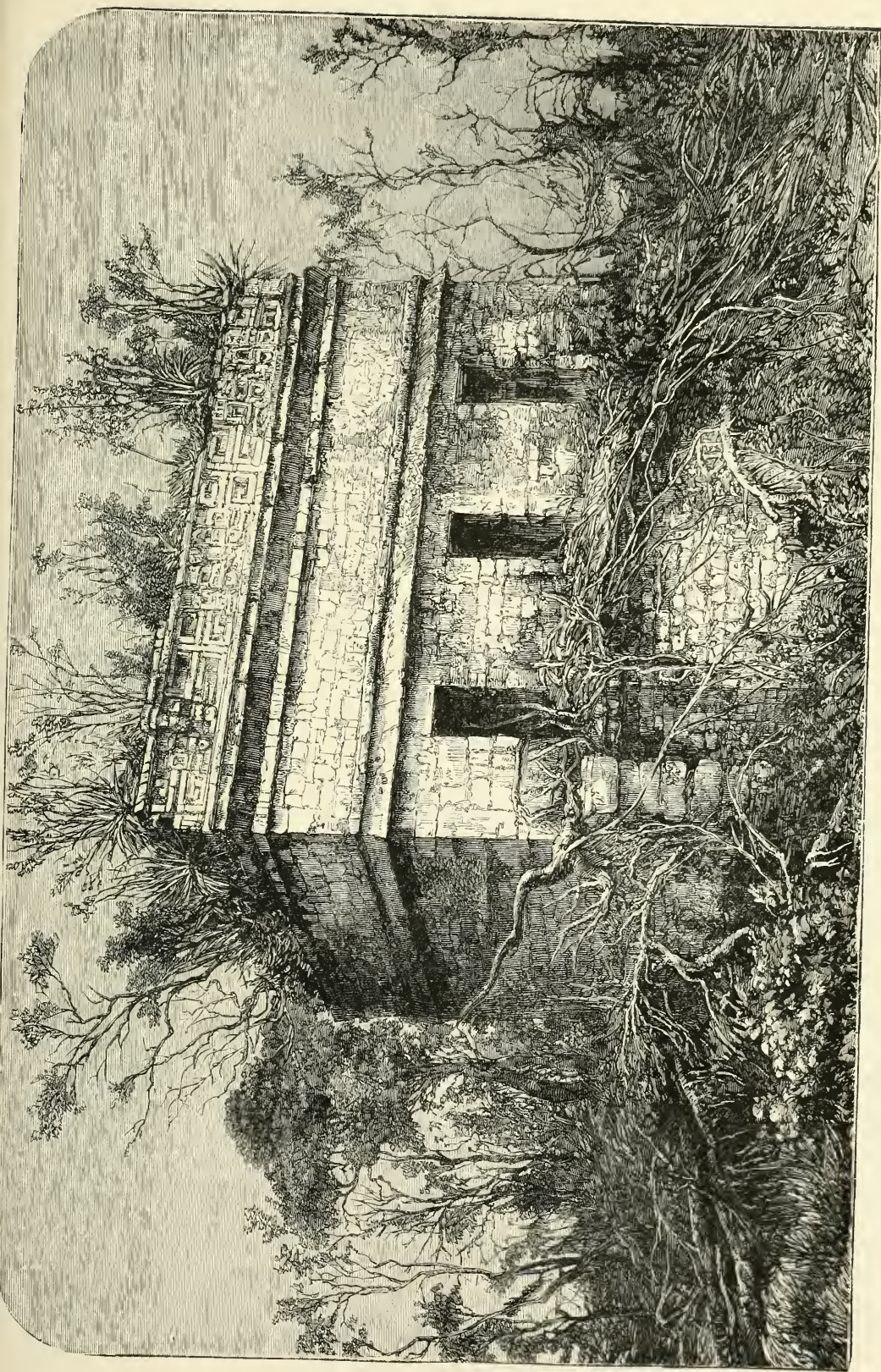
The Chichan-Chob, "Red House" (p. 351), is a small building about a hundred yards north of the Caracol; it stands on a rectangular platform, reached by a flight of twelve or fifteen steps. It is the best preserved monument at Chichen, and might be even now a pleasant residence; for time seems to have respected and to have left untouched its plain, smooth walls, and from its general appearance it cannot date further back than towards the last years of the city in the fifteenth century. Three doorways to the north lead into a

corridor extending over the whole length of the building, whence three more openings give access to as many apartments in a perfect state of preservation. Over these doorways, and running the whole length of the corridor, is a narrow stone tablet, on which is graven a row of hieroglyphics very much damaged, of which Stephens gave a faithful reproduction.

The situation of Chichen is due probably to the great cenotés which supplied the city with abundant water, and which differ from the complicated underground passages noted in other parts of the state, being immense natural pits of great depth, with perpendicular sides. Of these cenotés, that for general use occupied the centre of the place; picturesque must have been the throng of white-robed women who peopled its steps at all hours of the day to fetch water for household purposes, carrying double-handled urns on their shoulders or on their hips just as they do at the present day. The other, or sacred cenoté, lies in a tangle of wood on the confines of the city, to which a path had to be opened. We find midway a large broken statue of Tlaloc, similar to the two we reproduce further on; the upper portion of the body and the head are wanting. Near it are ruinous heaps, remains of two temples, their base occupied by immense heads of Quetzalcoatl, who seems to have been the tutelary deity of Chichen. On fragments of walls still standing, I notice bas-reliefs in excellent preservation, one representing a large fish with a human head,* and the other a figure of a man after death.

Landa's description of these temples would lead us to infer that they were entire in his time, for he says: "Some distance north of the Castillo were two small theatres built with square blocks; four flights of steps led to the top, paved with fine

* By a curious coincidence, a sculptured fish having a human head is found on a Romance capital in the Church of St. Germain-des-Prés.



CHICHAN-CHOB, PRISON OF CHICHEN. YTZA.

slabs, and on which low comedies were performed."* Notwithstanding Landa and Cogolludo's testimony, we think they were temples on whose summits the Christianised Indians performed their religious ceremonies, which from fear of anathemas they represented to the good bishop as comedies.

The sacred cenoté lies 150 yards beyond; it is oblong in shape, and the two diameters measure from 130 to 165 feet. The surface of the water cannot be reached, for the wall, some 65 feet high, is entire and perpendicular throughout. The desolation of this *aguado*, its walls shrouded with brambles, shrubs, and lianas, the sombre forest beyond, but above all the lugubrious associations attaching to it, fill the imagination with indescribable melancholy.

Hither pilgrims repaired, and here offerings were made; for Chichen was a holy city, and among her shrines the cenoté held a conspicuous place, as the following passage from Landa will show: "From the courtyard of the theatre, a good wide road led to a well some little distance beyond (the road was therefore in perfectly good condition), into which in times of drought the natives used to throw men, *as indeed they still do* (1560), as an offering to their deities, fully believing that they would not die, even though they disappeared. Precious stones and other valuable objects were also offered; and had the country been rich in gold, this well would contain a vast quantity, because of the great veneration of the natives for it. The aguado is round, of great depth, measuring over 100 feet in width and cunningly hewn out of the rock.† The green colour of the water is due to the foliage; on its banks rises a small building filled with idols in honour of all the principal

* Landa, sec. xlii. p. 344.

† The good bishop saw the hand of man in a natural phenomenon not understood in his time.

edifices in the country, exactly like the Pantheon in Rome. I cannot say whether this is an ancient practice or an innovation of the aborigines, who find here their idols to which they can bring their offerings. I also found sculptured lions, vases, and other objects, which, from the manner they were fashioned, must have been wrought with metal instruments; besides two statues of considerable size of one single block, with peculiar heads, earrings, and the maxtli round their loins."* This passage is very remarkable, but the Abbé Brasseur, who translated it, does not seem to have grasped its true meaning. What, there was a plastered road in good preservation, a temple filled with idols brought thither by the existing natives, more than forty years after the Conquest, there were numerous offerings in honour of the various poliothe deities, statues representing the Mayas in their national costume, and yet it is urged that these temples were constructed before the Christian era! Landa's account ought to convince the most prejudiced; proving the town to have been, if not quite recent, comparatively so, and inhabited when Montejo occupied it for the first time, in 1527, since thirty-three years later (1560) devotees were still visiting its shrines. This is also the conclusion arrived at by Stephens, who had fewer data in support of it.

These pages had already been written when I received Chicxulub's Chronicles, written at the time of the Conquest, by the Cacique Nakuk-Peck; translated and published by Brinton, Philadelphia, 1882, containing most valuable information whereby my theory is strengthened with all the weight of an official document.

Sec. 4. Nakuk-Peck, writing of Montejo's expedition to Chichen-Itza, 1527, says: "He set out to reconnoitre the place called Chichen-Itza, whence he invited *the chief of the town*

* Landa, sec. lii. p. 346.



SACRED CENOTÉ OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

to come and see him; and the people said unto him: '*There is a King, my Lord, there is a King, even Cocom aun Peck, King Peck, King Chel of Chicantun;*' and Captain Cupul said to him: '*Stranger warrior, take your rest in these palaces.*' So spoke Captain Cupul." After this, can it be further doubted that Chichen was inhabited at the Conquest? Of Izamal he says:

Sec. 18. "When the Spaniards established themselves at Merida in 1542, the chief orator, the *high-priest Kinich-Kakmó and the King of the Tutulxius from Mani, made their submission.*" Obviously Kinich-Kakmó was the generic name for the high-priests at Izamal who were in full possession of their religious prerogatives at the coming of the Spaniards; consequently the temples and palaces of both Izamal and Chichen were then inhabited. These passages tell us, moreover, what we did not yet know—that after the fall of Mayapan the head of the Cocomes took possession of the principality of Chichen (the fall of Mayapan and the migration of the Chichimecs were probably contemporaneous events), that Kinich-Kakmó was the ally of Tutulxiu, King of Mani, since, jointly with him, he offered his alliance to Montejo, and that the latter and Cocom, both of Toltec descent, were enemies struggling for supremacy over the province.*

We read in Torquemada and other writers that the first to arrive in the country were the Cocomes, penetrating the peninsula from Tabasco towards the end of the twelfth century, under the command of their chief Quetzalcoatl, after they had already subdued and civilised most of the northern portion of Yucatan. They were succeeded a century later by the Tutulxius, who marked their passage through the Usumacinta Valley by the erection of Lorillard and Tikal.

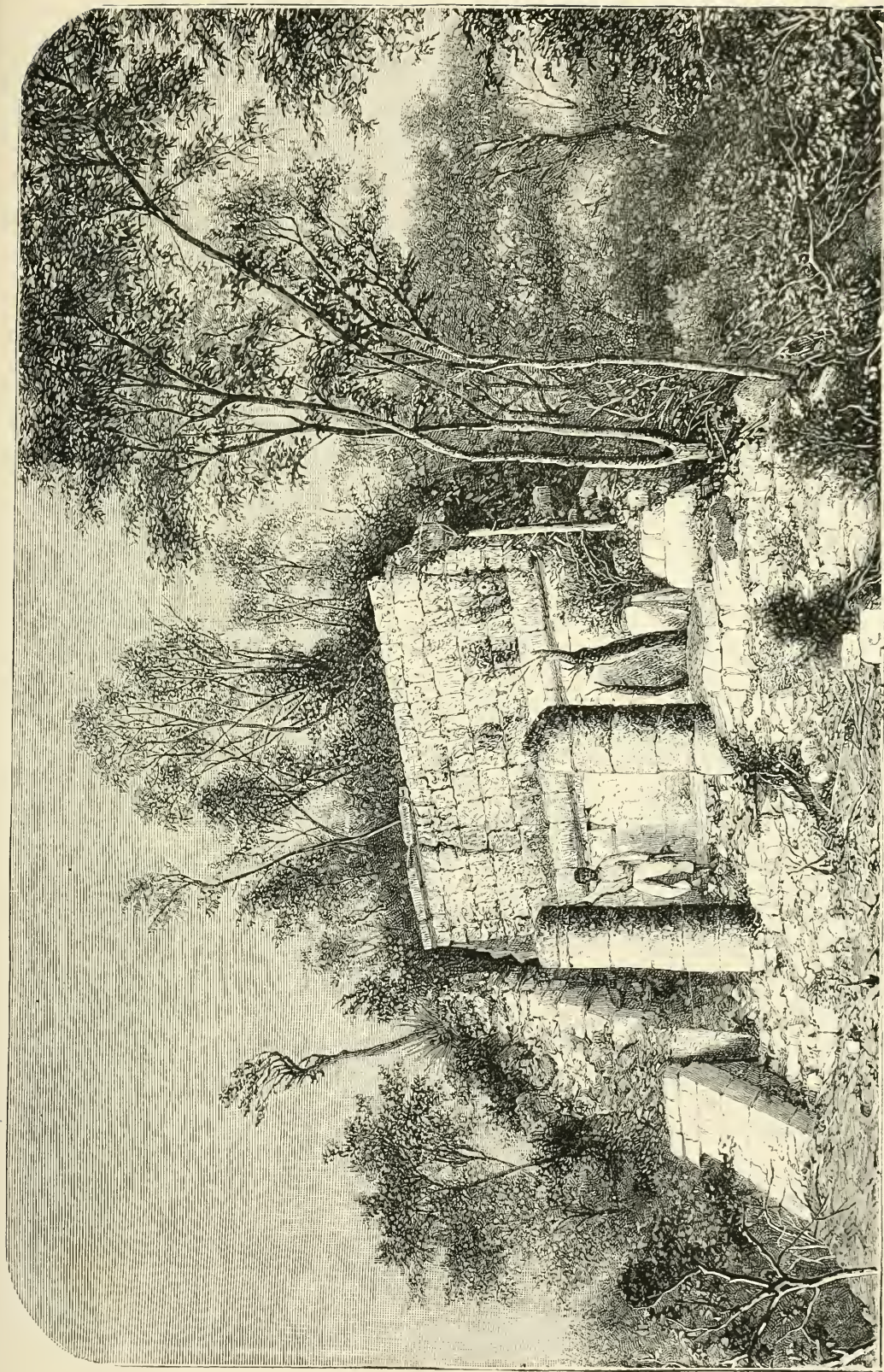
* Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. viii. p. 47.

Herrera and Landa tell us that "several tribes came from Chiapas, having entered Yucatan by the south, although this is not generally known to the natives themselves, but he (Landa) conjectures it from the great number of names and verbal constructions common to Chiapas and Yucatan, as from considerable vestiges of deserted localities (Palenque, Ocosingo, and Lorillard, etc.). These tribes dwelt in the wilderness south of the peninsula, journeying hence to the hilly region of Kabah, Uxmal, etc., where they settled down under their chief Tutulxiu, spreading everywhere the worship of the Sun, the Moon, Tlaloc, and Quetzalcoatl, their chief deities. They lived in great peace with the former inhabitants, and with one another. They had no arms, snaring animals with nets or taking them with lazos."* Yet these kindred tribes, the Cocomes and Tutulxius, so mild in disposition, became fierce and quarrelsome soon after the settlement of the latter in the district, both struggling for supremacy. In this conflict, Mayapan was successively occupied by the victorious party, while both succumbed to the caciques, who, taking advantage of these inter-tribal contentions, consolidated their power, when the peninsula was divided into eighteen independent provinces, continually at war with each other, which finally worked the destruction of the Maya-Toltec civilisation.

Aware of the treasures the cenoté might contain, I had provided myself with two automatic Toselli sounding-machines, one of which is capable of bringing up half a cubic metre deposit; but unfortunately I could not get it to work, owing to the height of the walls, the depth of the water, and the enormous detritus of several centuries.

The Tennis-court is at once the largest and the best preserved of any structure of this description; it consists of two

* *Ut supra.*



SMALL TEMPLE IN THE TENNIS-COURT OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

perpendicular parallel walls from north to south, 34 by 325 feet, 32 feet high, and 113 feet apart. Both ends are occupied by two small temples always seen in structures of this kind. The southern edifice has no ornamentation of any interest; the northern, which is shown in our cut, contains a single apartment, with a portico to the south supported by columns, forming a balcony whence the grandees witnessed the game sheltered from the fierce rays of the sun.

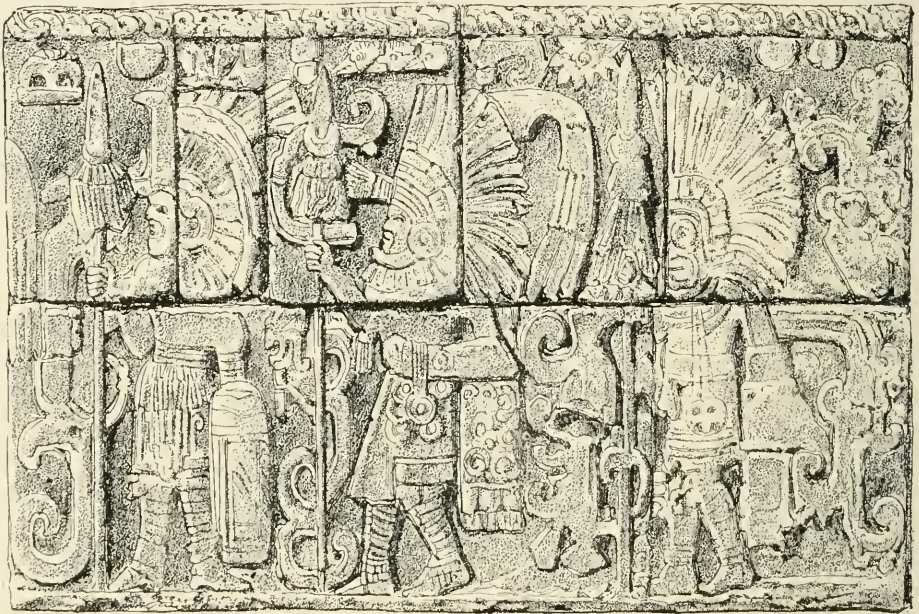
The ruinous condition of this building will not allow us to judge of its external decoration; but the columns and the walls in the interior are covered with rows of human figures in bas-relief, so damaged, however, that the subjects represented cannot be recognised. The inner walls facing each other, have in the centre of each, some 15 feet from the ground, two stone rings with a hole through the centre, similar to the one we dug up at Tula. The vast proportions of this *tlachtli* indicate that the national Nahua game was as eagerly played in Yucatan as on the table-land.

From the remaining sculptured fragments, whether bases, shafts of columns, or reliefs, representing Quetzalcoatl, we are induced to believe that this stately building was dedicated to this god; all the more that the south end of the eastern wall is occupied by a monument where his symbolical image is everywhere seen. It consists of two apartments of different size, richly decorated; a portico gave access to the main chamber (our cut shows its dimensions), where the bases of the columns are covered with finely sculptured serpents' heads with protruding tongues, over 9 feet long, bearing the characteristics of those on the great temple at Mexico which date 1484-1486.

The southern façade of this monument has a beautiful interlaced frieze, with a procession of tigers, divided by richly fringed shields, bearing a strong resemblance to those of the

various tribes, published by Lorenzana with Cortez' letters, and similar to those generally seen in the Mexican manuscripts. We think we recognise in this a monument of Quetzalcoatl commemorating his victory over Tezcatlipoca in his foot-ball match which took place at Tula, and that this is so seems highly probable.

In the chamber which stood over the ruined portico



BAS-RELIEF IN HALL OF TENNIS-COURT OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

there was, twenty years ago, a series of paintings descriptive of domestic and public life among the Mayas, now entirely destroyed by barbarous explorers, or by the inhabitants of Pisté. Stephens, who saw them, says that they were painted in bright colours of blue, red, yellow, and green. Fortunately for us, three sides of the pillars at the entrance are still covered with sculptures, as also the lintels, and all are in better preservation than any at Chichen-Itza, as may be seen in our drawing. Here also, we find numerous analogies with

Mexican monuments, which, it should be recollected, were the result of Toltec teaching.



TIGERS' BAS-RELIEFS ON PORTION OF TENNIS-COURT OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

All the human figures seen on these monuments have the usual type of the Toltecs of the high plateaux. Their gala dress, like that of the reliefs at page 362, is identical with the dress of the figures on Tizoc's stone. It is always a head-

dress of feathers, a heavy collar of precious stones, a bundle of arrows in the left hand, while the right carries a knife similar to that carried by the figures of the Cuauhxicalli, so that we might almost fancy we are following in the train of a Nahua pageant so vividly portrayed by Sahagun, when he says:

“In the feast of the God of Fire, which was held in the month *Izcalli*” (the eighteenth month), “the nobles wore a high-fronted paper coronet, with no back to it, a kind of false nose of blue paper, a collar and medallions around their necks, while in their hands was carried a wooden knife, the lower half of which was painted red and the upper white.”* In our cut, the figure to the right wears the mitre just described with the piece of paper about the nose, while the collar and the wooden knife may be seen in both, just like those



DOOR-POSTS OF HALL IN THE TENNIS-COURT OF CHICHEN-ITZA.

we see on Tizoc's stone. The analogy is as curious as it is striking.

Further, to the right of our drawing (page 365), the figures, besides the huge feather head-dress, carry in their hands spears barbed with feathers, like the figures to the extreme left on Tizoc's

* Sahagun, "Hist. de las Cosas de la Nueva España," lib. II. cap. xxxvii.

stone. These warriors are distributed in groups of two, the conqueror to the left, the vanquished to the right; the latter in the act of presenting the sacred knife he holds in his hand, as a sign of submission. Some of the warriors, instead of the knife, have a two-handed sword, "*macana*," furnished with blades of obsidian of Toltec manufacture; a few have their noses pierced, and wear a golden ball, or the obsidian *bezoté*,



TIZOC'S STONE, IN MEXICO.

on their under-lip, as a badge of knighthood, which they had adopted from the Nahuas of the Uplands. Further, each figure, whether in the Mexican or Maya bas-relief, wears a kind of casque, fashioned in the shape of a crocodile, a bird, a serpent, or a duck's head, etc., with his name on it. Slight differences of style may occur here and there; for these monuments belong to remote epochs, while Tizoc's stone only dates back to 1485; but the fact that they are found at

a distance of more than 900 miles from each other does not make their resemblance less marvellous.

We will end our comparisons with a description of the following statues, which ought to convert the most obstinate to our theory. One was discovered at Chichen-Itza five or six years ago, by Leplongeon, an American explorer; the other in the neighbourhood of Tlascala, close to Mexico, at a considerable distance from the former. The two statues represent the Toltec



STATUE OF TLALOC FOUND AT CHICHEN-ITZA.

god Tlaloc, according to Mr. Hamy, whose view I take. This view receives additional probability from the existence of a third statue, which was found I know not where, and which is the property of Mr. Baron of Mexico, who bought it among several other Aztec antiquities, and had it placed in his beautiful garden at Tacubaya, whence it has, I suppose, been removed to Spain. "This statue," says Jesus Sanchez, "is smaller than the other two, measuring but 3 feet by 1 foot 7 inches by 2 feet high. It also represents a man lying on his back, his legs drawn up, his

feet on the ground, and holding with both hands a vase which rests against his body."

There is no doubt that the same deity is figured in these three statues, whatever the ornamentation, which varies according to the epoch, the locality, or the imagination of the artist. But Sanchez adds, "recollecting that a number of Mexican statues were sculptured also beneath their base,



STATUE OF TLALOC OF TLASCALA (IN THE MUSEUM OF MEXICO).

I turned this, when I discovered several devices in relief. The sculptor had carved on the surface of the stone *a sheet of water, aquatic plants, two frogs, and a fish*; while the bank was occupied by *beans and grains of maize*, which are among the attributes of Tlaloc.* The statue in the Mexican Museum, although found at Tlascala, must necessarily be Toltec from its archaic character, and determines the origin of the second at Chichen-Itza. When we add that the same customs, the same institutions, the same manner of computing time, the same religion,

and the same arms, were common to both the tribes of the plateaux and the Mayas of the peninsula, as recorded by all ancient writers so often quoted in the course of this work, we think we may even more positively affirm that the Yucatec civilisation is both Toltec and recent.

There remains another monument to explore, which has not been understood by former travellers, whilst the drawing given by Stephens is altogether erroneous, but the probable use of which we think we can explain. At a distance of some 162 feet east of the Castillo, is a curious assemblage of several hundred small columns in rows, five or six abreast, 13 feet apart from each other, forming an immense quadrilateral. These columns, 6 feet high, some of which are still standing, consist of five round pieces, crowned by a beautifully cut but plain square capital.

By far the greater proportion are lying on the ground, their blocks disjointed but in order, while others are scattered about in great confusion. Two edifices, now demolished, save some fine sculptured fragments, occupied the angles north-east and south-west of the quadrilateral. We are of opinion that this vast structure was the Market-place.

It is not conceivable that so great a religious centre was not possessed of an establishment similar to those found in all the great cities of the Uplands, notably to any one familiar with the narratives of the time of the Conquest, in which the Mexican and Tlascalan market-places are described as having, like this monument, low colonnades, galleries, and buildings occupied by the judges entrusted with the various cases arising in and out of the Market-place.

The importance attached to the market on the table-land, leaves no doubt that it had equal rank in the peninsula, where

* Sanchez, "*Annales du Musée de Mexico*," tome I. p. 277.

the manners and requirements were identical. "In Mexico," says Clavigero, "the judges of the commercial tribunal, twelve in number, held their court in the market building, where they regulated prices and measures, and settled disputes. Commissioners acting under their authority patrolled the *tianquiztli* (market-place) to prevent disorder. Any attempt at extortionate charges, or at passing inferior or injured goods, or any infringement of another's right, was reported and severely punished."*

The king received a certain percentage on all goods brought to the market, in return for the protection thus extended to the merchants. The *tianquiztlis* of Texcoco, Cholula, and other cities, were on a similar plan, and Cortez speaks of the market at Tlascala as being attended by more than thirty thousand people.

Sahagun enumerates the various products which were sold, the judges who watched over the interests of buyers and sellers, the perfect order enforced, and the importance of the markets.†

What more natural than to suppose that the markets of the table-land had their counterpart in the peninsula, and that a great city like Chichen should have had an important *tianquiz*, which was frequented daily or at stated times by vast multitudes of traffickers, or that provision should have been made for sheltering them against the fierce tropical sun? Moreover, it is the only structure here which could have been used as a market; while its arrangement, the fact that it occupies the centre of the city, favour our assumption. According to Dr. Montano, the Indian word *tianquiz*, "market," is *tianggi* in the Malay language.

Meanwhile, our squeezes and our explorations had been going on *pari passu*; the former consisting of impressions taken from the best preserved and most interesting monuments. The labour

* Clavigero, tome i. lib. vii. p. 228.

† Sahagun, lib. viii. cap. xxxvi.

was now brought to a satisfactory termination, and our thoughts were directed to the packing and safe transport of so many precious objects. When this was accomplished, I entrusted the freight to some picked men to convey it to Pisté, whither we should follow.

All the time we had been at Chichen we had looked, but in vain, for Colonel Triconis' promised visit. We regretted it all the more as through his kindness we had obtained our escort, which had proved so helpful in our work. Our saddle and pack-horses had arrived from Citas; we were at the foot of the pyramid, putting the last hand to the loading, when the Colonel rode up. To shake hands, to tender our thanks for his civility, was all we had time to do before we all set out for Pisté, where we parted: Colonel Triconis to return to Valladolid, and we to Citas.

In the order of our march the squeezes went first, forming immense rolls covered with tarpaulin. We followed in silence, and our band had all the appearance of a funeral procession conveying the sacred ornaments of the priests of olden time.

We reached Citas without accident, and two days later were in Merida.



SECOND PALACE OF KABAH.

CHAPTER XIX.

KABAH AND UXMAL.

Departure for Ticul—Uayalceh—Mucuiche—Sacalun—An Old Souvenir—Ticul—Excavations at S. Francisco—Failure—Yucatec Vases—Entertainment at the Hacienda of Yokat—A Sermon in Maya—Hacienda of Santa Anna—Important Remains—The Ruins of Kabah—Monuments Surveyed—First Palace—Ornamental Wall—Cisterns—Inner Apartments—Second Palace—Great Pyramid—Ancient Writers Quoted—Stephens' Drawings.

THE road to Kabah, our next stage, passing by Ticul, lies as usual through a flat tract of land, varied here and there by plantations of henequen and maize. We reach the hacienda of Uayalceh about nine o'clock, where we make a stay of a

few hours to breakfast, visit the plantations and the house, consisting of an immense pile of building surrounded by cloisters, reared on an elevated eminence, presumably the site of an Indian palace; it being doubtful whether the Spanish builder would have gone to the enormous cost of constructing so vast an esplanade. A gallery, extending over the whole length of the building, is reached by twenty steps, where a hammock, comfortable arm-chairs, and a writing-desk raised on a platform are found, from which the mayor-domo can watch unobserved the proceedings of the establishment. This hacienda works its own henequen, employing some 1,200 hands; a strict discipline is observed, and apart from the monotonous chant of the youngsters, the low murmuring of the women, no sound is heard save that of the machinery or the wheel at the *Noria*, in constant movement for the requirements of the whole establishment. It is altogether a lively and interesting scene.

The large enclosure fronting the house is planted with bananas, the whole zapotee family, cocoa and orange-trees growing to the size of ilexes, alternated with roses and the rich variety of the tropical flora, filling the air with their sweet, penetrating fragrance, and extending to a wood which surrounds the factory.

Our excellent breakfast is served in a portion of the cool open cloister, washed down with a bottle of Spanish wine and a delicious cup of coffee. We pay our moderate bill, proffer our thanks to the mayor-domo for his civility, and resume our march, alighting at the hacienda of Mucuique to visit a cenoté, and reach Sacalun late in the afternoon, where we stop awhile to rest our hot, panting mules.

It was formerly a place of some importance; but its chief attraction lies in its cenoté, 65 feet deep. Steps with a balustrade

lead to the surface of the water, while the great stalactites which hang down from the vault and almost meet the stalagmites rising from the ground, form an imposing and weird scene. Yet it was here that I experienced the most charming adventure that I met in the whole course of my travels; and, although two-and-twenty years have elapsed, the dear, sweet remembrance of that day is as fresh as ever.

I was on my way to Uxmal, when through some egregious stupidity of the driver I was obliged to put up here for the night. There was of course no inn, and I found a bed at a poor widow's, who took in casual travellers like myself. The accommodation was of the scantiest: a hammock, a small table, a chair or two, was all the furniture of a room which was at the same time the kitchen, the parlour, and the sleeping chamber. The widow apologised for having nothing better to offer, but it was easy to guess from her noble manners and appearance, that she had known better days. I watched my dinner being prepared; the table neatly laid, everything so scrupulously clean, that I could have found it in my heart to be indulgent had the cooking been execrable, but all was as good and nice as would have satisfied the most fastidious palate. Two lovely maidens helped their mother and served at table; my eyes sought the younger, whose transparent skin, pearly teeth, hair of raven wing's blackness, magnificent, languid eyes, fairy-like form moving over the ground with an indescribable undulating movement, moved me body and soul every time she gazed in my direction. Her look of innocence and simplicity added to the charm which seemed to emanate from her whole person, accepting with child-like pleasure my open admiration, while a soft blush spread over her countenance as she met my enraptured gaze. Their story was this:

The hacienda had been burnt down, her husband massacred,

and she had been obliged to fly with her little ones to escape a worse fate, to find on their return the place a heap of ruins. She told of their lone, joyless life, of a still darker future, and tears coursed down her cheeks furrowed by care and privations rather than age.

I was young, impulsive, I wished I were rich. Why should I not . . . In a moment, ancient monuments, the world, my possible career, all was forgotten in face of these tearful countenances and their undeserved misfortune. Why not accept the love, the happiness, which were offered to me? And how delightful to relieve their misery, to feel that a whole family would be made happy and comfortable by me and through me! All this and a great deal more I expressed, and was amply repaid by the angelic smile of the young girl, and the mother's grateful acknowledgments. Night, however, brought calm to my disturbed imagination, and I resolved on a speedy flight, as the only means of escape from a too fascinating but dangerous position. The next day I announced my departure, and I never saw her again. And now, after so many years, I was back in the same place again. I sought the house, to find that my youthful love-dream was no longer here, but had gone to live somewhere in a large city. I came away sad at heart, disappointed; yet better so. In two-and-twenty years, Time, in all probability, had not spared her, more than he had me.

Ticul, whither we are bound, is reached in the evening, where, thanks to the kind offices of our friend Don Antonio Fajardo, a house has been secured for our accommodation.

Ticul is built on the lower slopes of the Sierra, which runs in a line from north-west to south-east of the peninsula. It is a small place, with a few good houses and shops; everything has a look of newness, as if built but yesterday, save the church and the monastery falling into decay, in which lived

the delightful padrecito Cirillo, whose pleasant gossip has been so charmingly recorded in Stephens' Journal. Almost the only inhabitable apartment is now occupied by Cirillo's brother, a dear old fellow, whose cheery, smiling face it is a pleasure to see. We make the "Tienda," where we have our meals, our receiving-room; our visitors are the schoolmaster, some Government *employés*, the Mayor, and Dr. Cuevas, an eminent archæologist,



YUCATEC AND TEOTIHUACAN VASES.

who presented me with a stick of zapoté, cut out of a lintel found at Kabah. Our evenings pass pleasantly enough, in agreeable conversation regarding the ruins found in this district.

In this way we learn that the hacienda of S. Francisco, some little distance from Sacalun, is an ancient Indian centre with two unexplored mounds, in one of which a skeleton and vases in good preservation were found some years since. I was seized with the desire to explore these eminences, but my

repeated attempts proved bootless, and I was obliged to give up the enterprise.

But kind friends here did not wish me to go away empty-handed, so they sent me some vases which had been unearthed in these mounds, just as I was sitting down in the evening to record my failure. Two are shown in our cut, on each side of the central one from Teotihuacan.

The resemblance between the ceramic art of Yucatan and that of the table-land, is seen at a glance. Their value as works of art is *nil*, but the peculiar ornamentation, common to all, cannot be over-estimated from the point of view of our theory. On examining this pottery, it is found that the potter made the vases with reliefs, which he coloured, varnished, and baked before he gave them to a carver who sculptured devices and figures with a flint chisel, as seen on the larger Yucatec vase, where palms, or, more likely, a symbolical figure was portrayed. The other is a sitting figure, with a feather head-dress, and tassels towards the top; whilst the Teotihuacan fragment represents a man in a stooping posture, a stick or sceptre in his right hand, offering an indeterminate object with his left to some figure engraved on the portion of the vase which has disappeared.

Our route to the ruins of Kabah lay through the hacienda of Santa Anna, to which they properly belong; but a path had to be opened first through woods and forests, and as the work would take two days at least, we accepted an invitation to witness an entertainment given by Don Fajardo at his hacienda of Yokat.

Entertainments are as well attended in this part of the world by this pleasure-loving people, as in a city. This will last three days, and will include national dances, bull-fights, high banqueting and junketing. The owner, with natural pride, shows me the vast proportions of his noble mansion, which stands at the foot

of a hill and is surrounded by beautiful gardens full of flowers. This being Sunday we all go to chapel, consisting in a long rambling gallery. Mass is followed by a sermon in Maya, which to my ear is very soft and pleasing.

The congregation numbers a large proportion of pretty women, all in their gala dress, kneeling and devout; but at the "Ite missa est," they disappear swifter than a flight of birds. I am introduced to the belles of the impending ball; refreshments are handed round, when every one of these hours comes up to dip her rosy lips in my glass; such is the fashion here, which I need hardly say I think a very nice fashion indeed. The guests are arriving very fast, filling already the courtyard, and the immense open space fronting the house which has been turned into a circus. Opposite to this is the ballroom, a leafy bower of flowering shrubs and evergreens; here and there are booths supplying thirsty customers with fiery *staventum* and English beer; and ere long these people, usually so grave and silent, make the whole place resound with the hubbub of thousands of voices and peals of merry laughter and joyful cries. The bulls have come; the circus is invaded by an immense multitude, all eager to see the sport. For my part, I prefer looking up at the galleries, crowded with beaming, bewitching Meztizas. Ye immortals! What faces and what figures! Mother Eve must have been a Meztiza, who "once beguiled, is ever beguiling."

Curious enough, in this assemblage, numbering over 2,000 people, hardly 400 men are found. As a fact, this disproportion between the masculine and feminine element is more or less noticeable in all warm countries, where the births average five females to two males. This degeneracy does not apply to the Indian portion of the population, for the civil wars, in which great numbers of able-bodied men perished, have added,

no doubt, to the feminine excess of the population. It is only fair to state that this is mere assumption on my part, based on no statistics, so that the fact may be exaggerated. What the morals of the natives are in face of a quasi-seraglio life, is a somewhat delicate question not easily answered. Broadly speaking, it may be said that the Indians are not a virtuous race; the frequency of these entertainments, extending over several days or rather nights, is hardly conducive to strict propriety of demeanour in an impassioned, amorous people. Be that as it may, this assemblage offers many interesting types for observation: the lower grades are a cross between the Malay and the Chinese; the aquiline nose of former times has become flat, the eyes somewhat sloping up, the lips thick, and the cheek-bones prominent, while wavy hair indicates an admixture of negro blood; very small hands, with thumbs so undeveloped as to be almost simian, are also observable.

Wearied of the tumult and the discordant sounds of native music, of national dances, which, however graceful, pall by their sameness, I set my face towards Ticul, to look after my men; when to my great relief I find that the path to the ruins has been cleared, and I can start whenever I choose. Don Antonio goes with us to the hacienda of Santa Anna, which is to be our head-quarters; whence *volan-cochés* will easily take us to Kabah, barely three miles distant. This hacienda was abandoned like so many others during the social war, and is now being restored with the material of an important pyramid lying at a short distance, once crowned by edifices now totally demolished. I notice square pillars in the detritus in good preservation topped by Doric capitals, and curiously enough, the angles are cut like the stones of our pavements, and bear evident traces of a metal instrument.

The road to the ruins has been so incompletely cleared, that we are in danger of being upset every minute by rocks and trees lying right over our path. In vain we desire the driver to moderate his speed, to be more careful, we might as well order



TRIUMPHAL ARCH OF KABAH (FROM STEPHENS).

the wind to be still ; and at a sharp turn of the road the *volan* comes with a tremendous crash against the trunk of a large tree, and we are pitched out ; the top of the carriage is smashed, and with aching bones and a few scratches, we find our way to the ruins on foot, now fortunately very near.

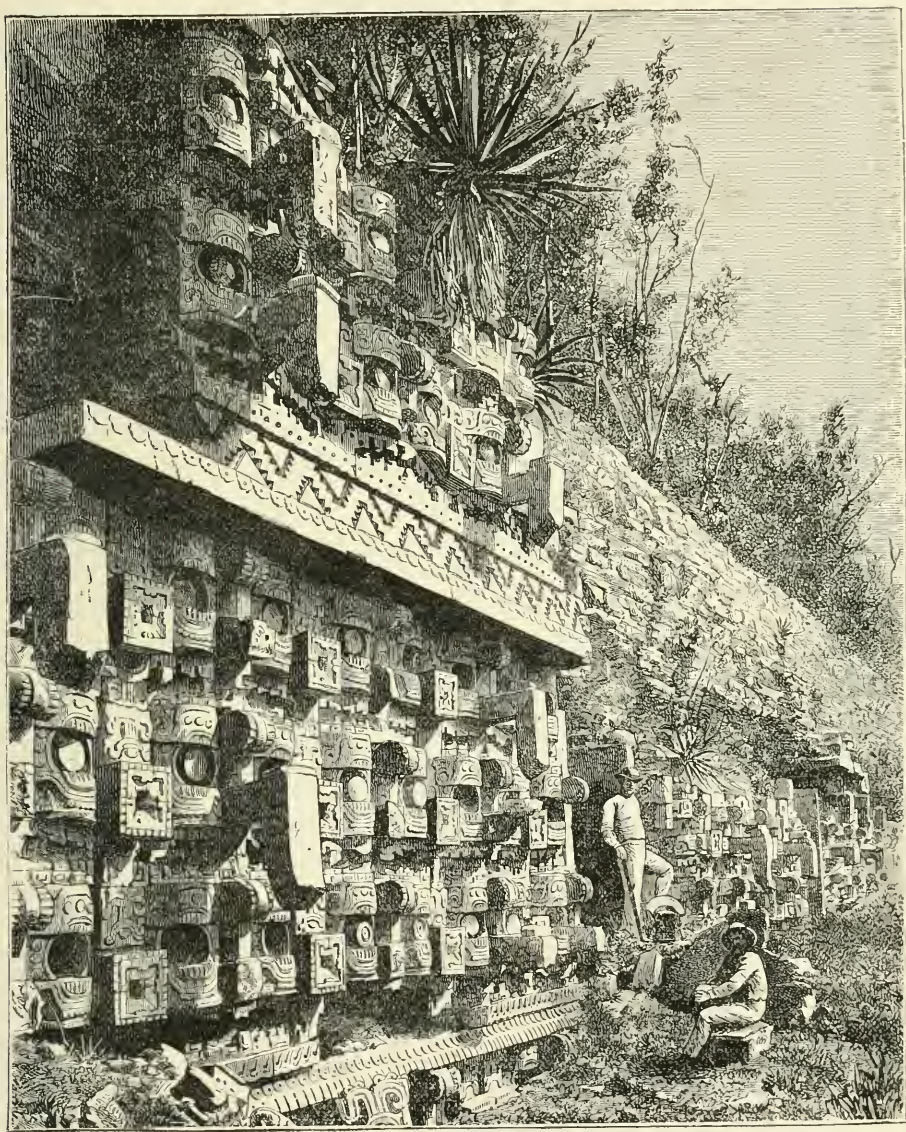
Ancient historians have made no mention whether of Kabah, Sachey, Labphak, or Iturbide, cities lying thirty or forty leagues south of Merida. Nevertheless, their rulers are incidentally mentioned under the general appellation of "*people of the Sierra.*" A glance at the map will show the position of these cities on the other side of the mountain range which traverses the peninsula.

Kabah was an important city, to judge from its monuments, which extend over a large space, consisting of high pyramids, immense terraces, triumphal arches, and stately palaces.* Stephens, who visited the place in 1842, has given beautiful drawings of its monuments; but the village, left to itself since the rebellion, has become an impenetrable forest, making a thorough exploration almost impossible. We were only able to visit half-a-dozen structures, of which only two are still standing. But these, coupled with those at Uxmal and Chichen, will suffice to give a right and complete idea of Yucatec architecture and civilisation.

The front of the first palace is richly decorated, consisting of large figures like those at Chichen, and recalling to mind the gigantic superimposed wooden idols met in the islands of the Pacific. The ornamentation of this monument is so elaborate that the architecture entirely disappears under it. Two salient cornices form a frame to immense friezes which, in their details, would compare favourably with our proudest monuments. The advanced state of ruin in which the structure is found, makes it difficult to judge of its original plan; but enough remains to

* We looked in vain for the triumphal and solitary arch mentioned by Stephens, a unique specimen of this kind of monument in America. It is 20 feet high by 14 feet wide; and we shall see later that it could only have been erected to commemorate a victory of the sovereign of Kabah. The reader will notice that in this monument the corbel vault is more convex, and recalls that of a ruinous palace at Palenque.

show how unlike other monuments were the decorations which extended over the whole façade, some 162 feet.



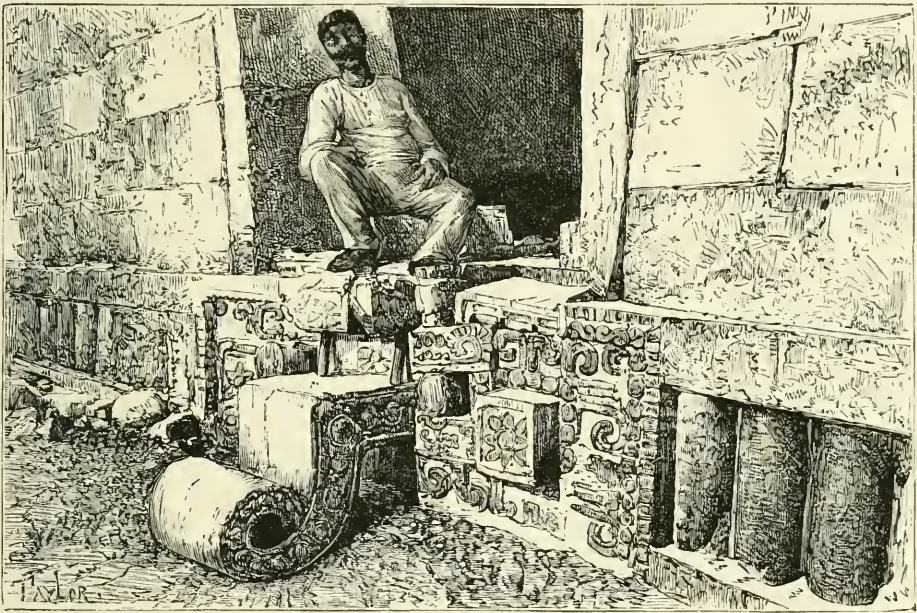
RUINS OF FIRST PALACE OF KABAH.

This palace, like all Yucatec monuments, rises on a two-storied pyramid; fronting it is a vast esplanade, which had a cistern on each side, while the centre was occupied by a "picoté."

Over the front, narrowing towards the top, was a decorative wall, usually found in Indian structures. Another peculiarity of these monuments is their facing south and west, and north and east, instead of the four cardinal points. The interior of this edifice has a double range of apartments, the finest we have as yet seen, measuring 29 feet long by 9 feet wide, and 19 feet high, supported by half arches of overlapping stones. One of the inner chambers is entered from the front apartment by three steps cut from a single block of stone, the lower step taking the form of a scroll. The walls at the sides, although half demolished, still show traces of rich decoration, which consisted of the usual device, whilst the projecting great figures of the façade are also noticeable on the steps, on each side of which are large round eyes. The mouth was below. All the apartments, and probably all the monuments, had their walls painted with figures and inscriptions, as shown in the few fragments which still remain. "Among the Mayas," says Viollet-le-Duc, "painting went hand-in-hand with architecture, supplementing each other." A picture as understood among us held a very secondary place, while outer decorations were all-important in the monuments at Kabah, which were of brilliant colours, and must have greatly enhanced the striking effect produced by these semi-barbarous, yet withal magnificent edifices.

The second palace, 160 yards north-east of the first, is likewise reared on a pyramid, fronted by an esplanade with two cisterns and a picoté; it has besides a second plateau, consisting of a range of ruined apartments. A flight of steps to the centre, supported by a half-triangular arch, leads to the edifice. This palace is only 16 feet high, and in strong contrast with the rich, elaborate ornamentation of the first. Its outer walls are plain, except groups of three short pilasters each surrounding the edifice above the cornice, forming a sloping rather than

perpendicular frieze, like those at Palenque, and in most Yucatec monuments. The front, 162 feet, is almost entire and pierced by seven openings; two have columns and primitive rude capitals, corresponding to the same number of narrow low apartments. As usual the ornamental wall is narrowing towards the top, and is distinctly seen through the vegetation covering the roof.



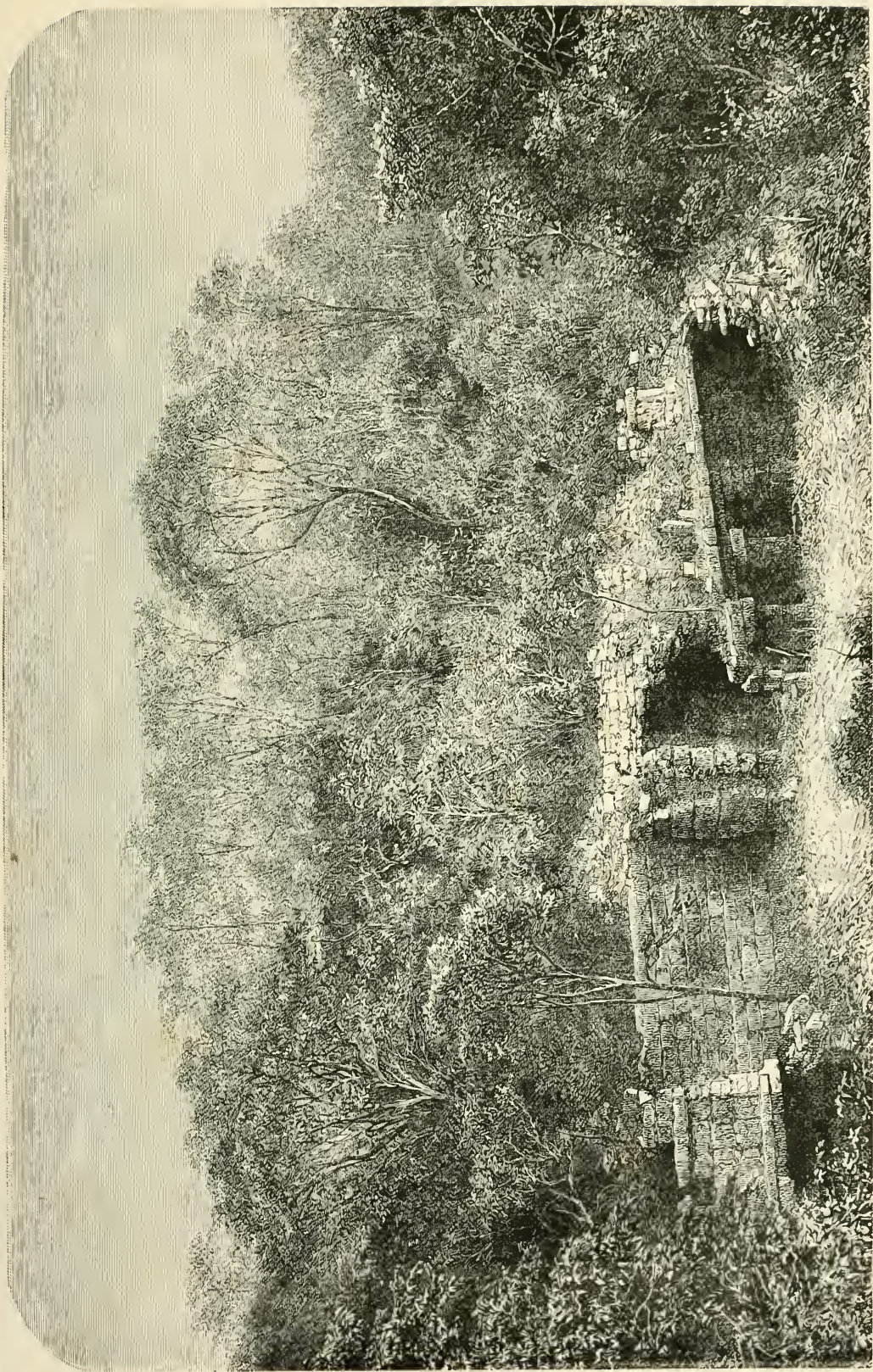
SHOWING STEPS AND INTERIOR OF FIRST PALACE OF KABAH.

The rear is a complete ruin. Traces of painting, of which tracings were made, are still visible in the central chamber. It was here that I thought I recognised the rude drawing of a horse and his rider, which was hailed with Homeric laughter; but, although I was mistaken in my supposition, I was very near the truth, since the fact I erroneously heralded at Kabah was found in the north. The discovery is due to S. Salisbury, who, in 1861, whilst exploring a group of mounds and structures, near the hacienda of Xuyum, fifteen miles north of Merida,

unearthed the remains of *two horses' heads*, made of very hard chalk, with bristling hair like a zebra.* The work shows considerable artistic skill, and the explorer thinks that it formed part of some bas-reliefs which had belonged to the demolished monuments. Indeed, it is highly probable that these heads were placed on the edifices built by the natives between Montejo's departure in 1530 and his return in 1541; proving that the aborigines had skilfully copied the Spanish horses, and that there was at Xuyum one monument at least similar to those we know. To comment on this would be sheer loss of time.

To the left of this building is a rectangular pyramid, with several stories, 162 feet at the base by 113 feet. Four outer staircases led up from story to story to edifices in an advanced state of ruin, having apartments extending all round, and doorways, some supported by columns, while others are mere openings, as shown in our drawing, which reproduces the north-west side. In this monument and in the second palace are found for the first time lintels of stone, nearly all in very good preservation. Historians have told us nothing regarding Kabah; nevertheless we have some guiding landmarks from which to reconstruct its history and that of Uxmal, of which in all probability it was a close ally, since the two cities lie at a distance of five leagues from each other, and were connected by a plastered road, traces of which are still visible. Consequently the same fate must have been common to both. We know that a century before the Conquest the lord of Mayapan ruled over the whole peninsula, having razed to the ground the capitals of his vanquished rivals, amongst whom were the caciques of Uxmal, Kabah, Labna, etc. This king of Mayapan introduced into the country a force of Mexican soldiers for

* Salisbury, "The Mayas," p. 25. Worcester, 1877.



NORTH-WEST SIDE OF PYRAMID OF KAJAH.

the maintenance of his authority;* and to ensure the good behaviour of the caciques he obliged them to reside at his court, where their state of vassalage was made up to them by a life of great pomp, at the expense of the sovereign.†

Now as the Aztec independence only dates from the reign of Itzcoatl (1426), their conquests and subsequent power cannot be earlier than the reign of Montezuma I. (1440); it is obvious, therefore, that they were not in a position to send reinforcements before 1440 to the ruler of Mayapan. This autocracy lasted but a few years; a coalition of the people of the Sierra was formed, war broke out, the king of Mayapan was vanquished, the city captured and sacked, when the hostage caciques returned to their native provinces. Landa places this event in 1420, whilst Herrera gives 1460 as the probable date. We think the latter justifies his chronology, since he writes "that seventy years elapsed between the fall of Mayapan and the coming of the Spaniards, varied by years of plenty, storms, pestilence, intestine wars, followed by twenty years of peace and prosperity down to the arrival of the Europeans."‡

He further states that each cacique took away from Mayapan all

* Eligio Ancona writes: "The king of Mayapan, whom we will call Cocom, distrusting both his great vassals and their allies, sought the support of foreigners against them. He entered into negotiations with the Aztec military authorities of Tabasco and Xicalango" (he probably means Goatzacoalco, for it is certain that the Aztec dominion did not extend beyond that limit), "and it is said that the Mayapan ruler promised to quarter the troops they should send to his capital. Cocom's proposals were accepted, and a strong Nahua garrison entered the city. The names of the Mexican leaders given in the Maya MS. are *Ahzin-Teyut-Chan Tzumtecum*, *Taxaal*, *Ponte-Mit Itztecna* and *Kakaltecat*." All the traditions are agreed on the arrival of the Mexicans in the peninsula, and the investigations of Don Juan Kanil show that the witnesses he examined swore that his ancestors had come from Mexico by order of Montezuma the Elder.—C. E. ANCONA, "Hist. de Yucatan," Merida, 1878.

† Cogolludo, lib. iv. cap. iii.

‡ Herrera, Decade IV. lib. x. cap. iii.

the scientific books they could conveniently carry, and that on their return home they erected temples and palaces, which is the reason why so many buildings are seen in Yucatan; that following on the division of the territory into independent provinces, the people multiplied exceedingly, so that the whole region seemed but one single city."* Landa says "the monuments were built by the natives in possession of the country at the time of the Conquest, since the bas-reliefs represent them with their types, their arms, and their dress; and "that on going through the woods and forests, groups of houses and palaces of *marvellous construction* were found."† This is sufficiently clear, and whether these monuments were inhabited or not at the coming of the Spaniards, is beside the question. On the other hand, the prosperity mentioned by Herrera and Landa found expression in the peculiar monument, which in its original plan represented the florid style, always observable at the end or the brilliant beginning of a new art, being the reproduction of an older style, varied by elaborate ornamentation of questionable taste.

It is usual for a nation to commemorate a return to independence by the erection of triumphal arches, statues, and monuments. That this was the case at Kabah is shown in the two remarkable bas-reliefs in our drawings, which were probably part of a monument raised in honour of the victory obtained by the allied caciques. Like the Tizoc stone, these bas-reliefs represent a conqueror, in the rich Yucatec costume, receiving the sword of a captive Aztec; the latter is easily recognised from his plainer head-dress and the maxtli girding his loins. His head-dress is identical to those described by

* Herrera, Decade IV. lib. x. cap. ii.

† Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. x. p. 59.

Lorenzana in his letters to Cortez and Charles V., and not unlike those which the Mexican conquerors sometimes exacted from their vanquished foes. The other bas-relief has the same characteristics, but the head-dress is even more significant, for it is fashioned out of the head of an animal like those of the



BAS-RELIEFS AT KABAH (FROM STEPHENS).

Mexican manuscripts. In this relief the conqueror spares the life of the vanquished, bidding him depart in peace. It is obvious, nay, we affirm, that this is a representation of a battle between Yucatecs and Mexicans dating somewhere between 1460

and 1470 ;* since we know that Mayapan was the only city which implored the aid of the Aztecs, and that after its destruction the inhabitants obtained permission to establish themselves in the province of Maxcanu, east of Merida, where their descendants are found to this very day. These repetitions were necessary to convince a class of archæologists who claim for these monuments a hoary antiquity.

* Compare the striking resemblance between the Aztec warrior in our Temalacatl drawing, chap. iii. p. 42, and the kneeling figure.



HACIENDA OF UXMAL.

CHAPTER XX.

UXMAL.

From Kabah to Santa Helena—A Maya Village—Uxmal—Hacienda—The Governor's Palace—Cisterns and Reservoirs—The Nunnery and the Dwarf's House—Legend—General View—"Cerro de los Sacrificios"—Don Peon's Charter—Stephens' Plan and Measurements—Friederichsthal—Conclusion—Our Return.

FROM Kabah to Santa Helena we travel at last on a good road, wide enough to secure us against collisions, smooth enough and shady enough to make locomotion highly agreeable; a sensation which is increased rather than diminished on reaching the beautiful native village of Santa Helena, extending over a wide expanse divided in square blocks like a modern town. Each

dwelling is planted with *ciruclos*, with orange-trees, a profusion of flowers, and encompassed by a fencing wall. Near the huts are aerial gardens, made by means of poles fixed in the ground supporting twined branches covered over with a few inches of earth, where the cottagers grow flowers and vegetables; while the yard is occupied by multitudes of cackling hens, quacking ducks, and grunting pigs. The church stands in the centre of the village, on the site of an ancient temple.

This hamlet was like a vision of the past, for from all we had seen and knew, it was easy to conjure up what it had been in former times. Nor will it seem unnatural that little or no modification should be observable in an Indian village, if it be considered what powerful factors are traditions, instincts, and surroundings, particularly with a rural population. When the Spaniards imposed their religion on the Mayas, they did so by the sword rather than persuasion; but the natives retained their culture, their customs, and their national dress, whereas the conquerors forgot their own language, were modified at the contact of the subdued race, and adopted their ancient institutions, the better to replace the caciques.

Yucatan, as we have seen, was under a feudal system of government before the Conquest, when it was followed by "encomiendas," giving the Spaniards the right to enforce the services of the natives to the number of one or two thousand to each cavalier according to his importance. The marks of this system are observable in all great buildings which formerly were a centre or a manor-house; whilst from the number of pyramids may be surmised the power of the cacique once the lord of the locality. At the present day, it is true, centres are few in number, and in consequence of the cruel treatment of the natives by the conquerors, they have fallen to a tenth of their primitive numerical strength; yet cities, ham-

lets, and haciendas are even now standing witnesses of how far superior was the condition of the Mayas before the coming of the Europeans. Nothing is changed, save that the ancient lords have fallen into servile condition, that haciendas and Moorish-Spanish structures have superseded the princely palaces and the mansions of the gentry, and that the straight American doorway and triangular arch are replaced by the Arab-Hispano arch; but if the ancient palaces are a ruinous mass, the huts of the peasantry cluster now as of old around the manor-house. Religion alone has changed; the church has succeeded to the temple without replacing it; the Christian dogma seems cold and arid to a singularly mystic people, who in the days of their national life peopled the forests with votive chapels and mysterious voices.

To continue: we reach safely Sac-Akal, a wretched hacienda lost in a trackless wilderness, when we disappear in the dense vegetation which completely invades our path, and after much difficulty we arrive at the hacienda of Uxmal late in the evening. We are received by the mayor-domo, Don Perez, and, under the auspices of his charming daughter, an excellent supper is soon got ready; when, with feet under the table, and a pleasant talk with our host, the fatigues and harass of the journey are soon forgotten. The hacienda is no longer the dismal habitation of former days; on its site is reared an imposing pile of building, containing lofty apartments, surrounded by open cloisters. A sugar factory gives employment to a large number of hands, while a tramway connects it with the sugar plantations, and facilitates the transport to the mill. All is bustle, movement, and noise; but the place is now as unhealthy as ever, and the mayor-domo himself is a martyr to fever and ague.

The ruins are some two thousand yards beyond. We set

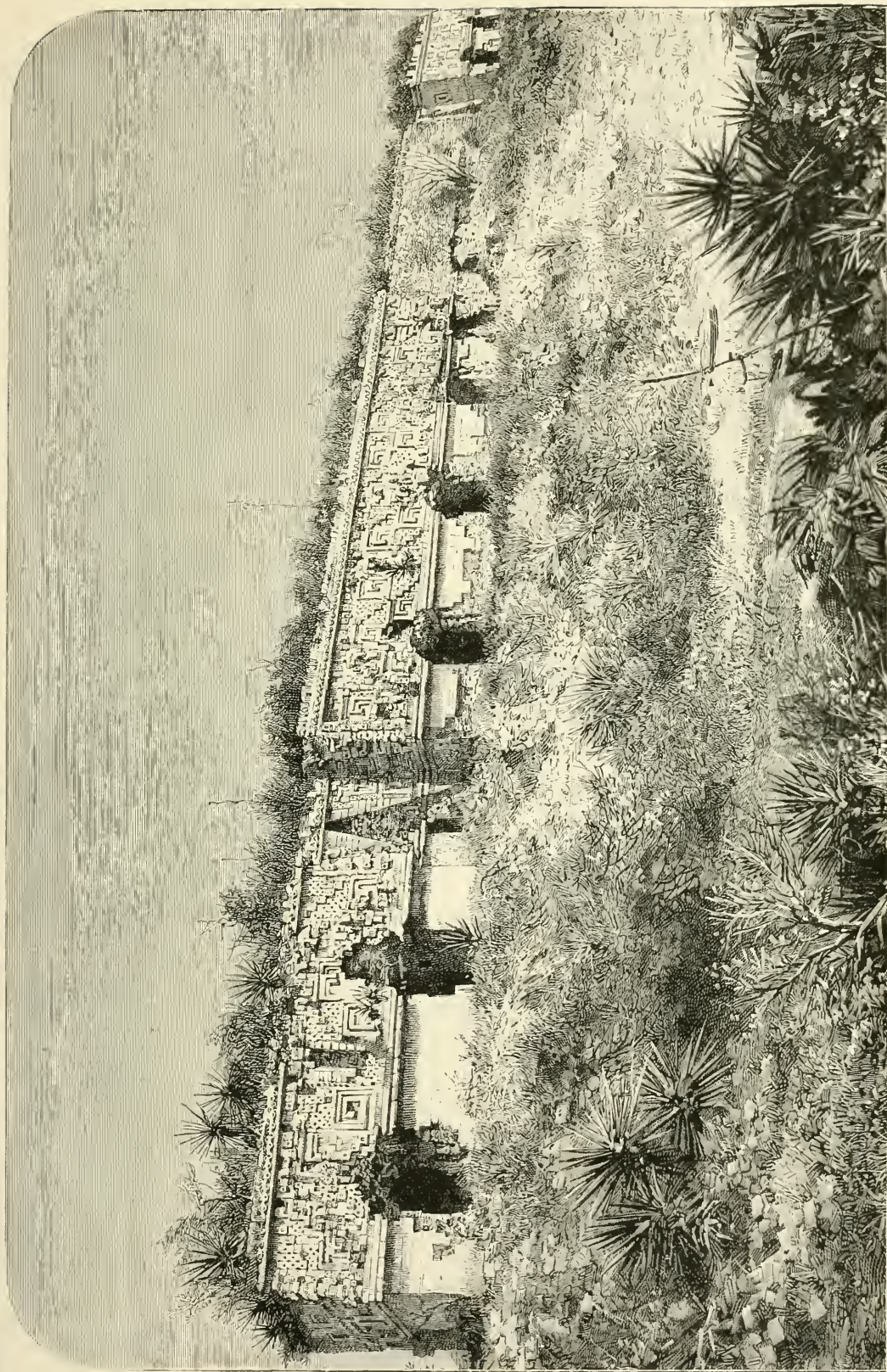
out the next day to visit them ; but the aspect of these old palaces, which I had looked forward to visiting with so much anticipation, was most disappointing. Owing to the vegetation which is suffered to clothe everything with its thick green mantle, the general outline of the city, nay, an entire structure, is no longer discernible. From their state of good preservation some monuments at Uxmal seem to belong to the revival we noticed at Kabah, and to be more recent than those at Chichen.

The place has been so often visited and written about that we will limit ourselves with describing the palaces reproduced in our cuts, noticing, at the same time, any fresh indication in support of our theory.

The Governor's Palace, reared on three successive colossal terraces, is the most extensive, the best known, and the most magnificent monument of Central America ; its ornamentation is in turns simple or very elaborate. The frieze, which runs in a line of 325 feet, having a row of colossal heads, divided in panels, filled alternately with grecques in high relief, and diamond or lattice-work, is most striking in its effect. The palace looks new, although it has been abandoned for over three hundred years ; and it would be entire had it not been for the vandalism of its owners, who used the stones of the basement for the erection of their hacienda.

The youthful appearance of this edifice is obvious to the observer, for monuments, like men, carry more or less their age on their countenance, which a thoughtful mind can easily read. Their wrinkles are seen in the fissures of their walls, in their stones eaten away by the elements, whilst the moss, the trees, and the lianas mantling over them, complete their hoary exterior.

A tradition derives the name of Uxmal from a word meaning



THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE, UXMAL.

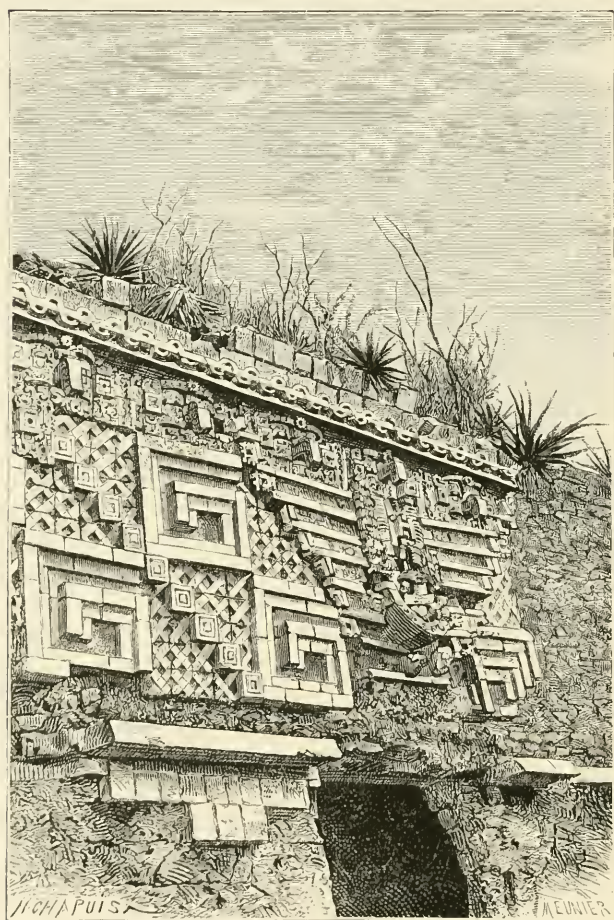
“thrice built;” whether the town was demolished and reconstructed, or whether its monuments were built three times, does not appear. The latter version would indicate the Indian method of building. In fact, this is seen in all our drawings of the palace, where the fallen edifice shows that the inner wall is in a perfect state of preservation, forming an independent work. These inner walls formed the apartments of the edifice, and in all probability were perpendicular to a height of some 6 to 9 feet, when the side walls began to approach each other so as to form the false vault (triangular arch) of the double range of apartments of the palace.

This was the shell or first construction. Then the interval between the arches was filled by layers of stone, whilst the outside walls, resting on the arches, were solid masonry. This was the second construction. Then came the third, when the outer walls were covered with tenons and sculptures. It should be added that this mode of building is applicable to all stone structures, and may have been generally adopted.

Two cisterns and a picoté are found on the esplanade facing the palace. The entrance or mouth to each cistern is a circular opening, 9 feet deep by 16 feet in diameter. Similar excavations are of frequent occurrence throughout the city of Uxmal and the vicinity, where they were chiefly used by the lower orders. There were also great artificial reservoirs, with cisterns at the bottom for collecting rain-water.

The decoration on the main entrance of this palace deserves particular mention. The wooden lintels have been removed, the projecting cornice has fallen; but above it the walls were covered with ornamentation in high relief of infinite skill and magnificence, which, alas! has been destroyed or carried away by early explorers. Higher still are three eagles with half-spread wings, followed by a circular pedestal supporting the mutilated bust of

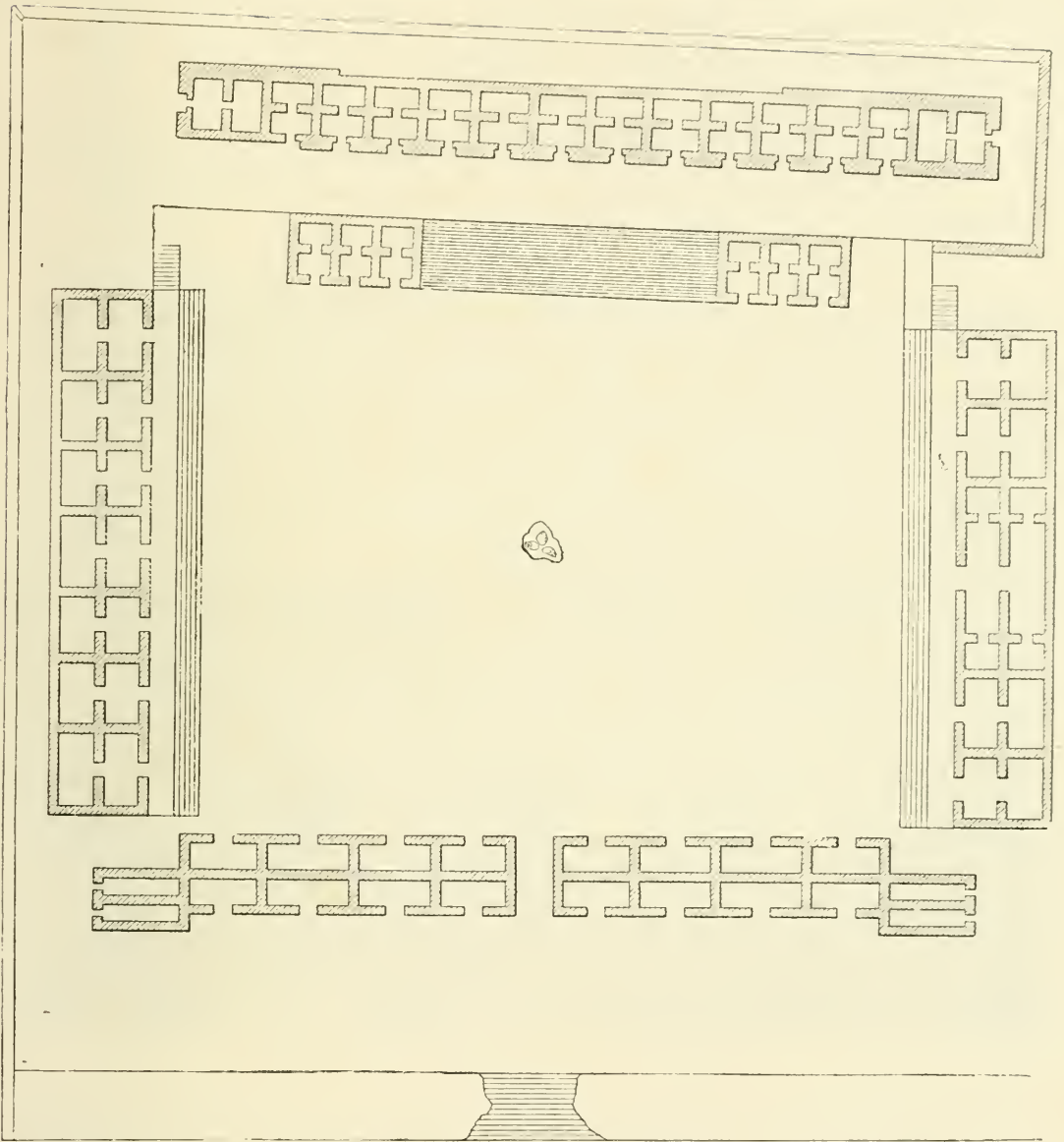
a human figure, without arms, and whose head, now deficient, was surmounted by a lofty plumed head-dress. In the plinth are three heads of Roman type, beautifully executed; while on each side of the main figure are the inscriptions which we reproduce.



PORTION OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE, UXMAL.

At Uxmal, all the lintels over the doorways are of wood, of which a large proportion is in a perfect state of preservation—a clear proof of their recent period. Nor were these the only pieces of wood used in these buildings: across the ceilings from side to side, and about mid-height, stretched small wooden beams, the ends of which were built in the stone-work, as seen by the holes in the walls and the ends of the

beams which have not completely disappeared. We have said in a former chapter that doors were unknown to the aborigines; here four rings or stone hooks are found inside the doorways near the top, from which it is easy to conjecture that a wooden board was placed inside against the opening, and kept in place



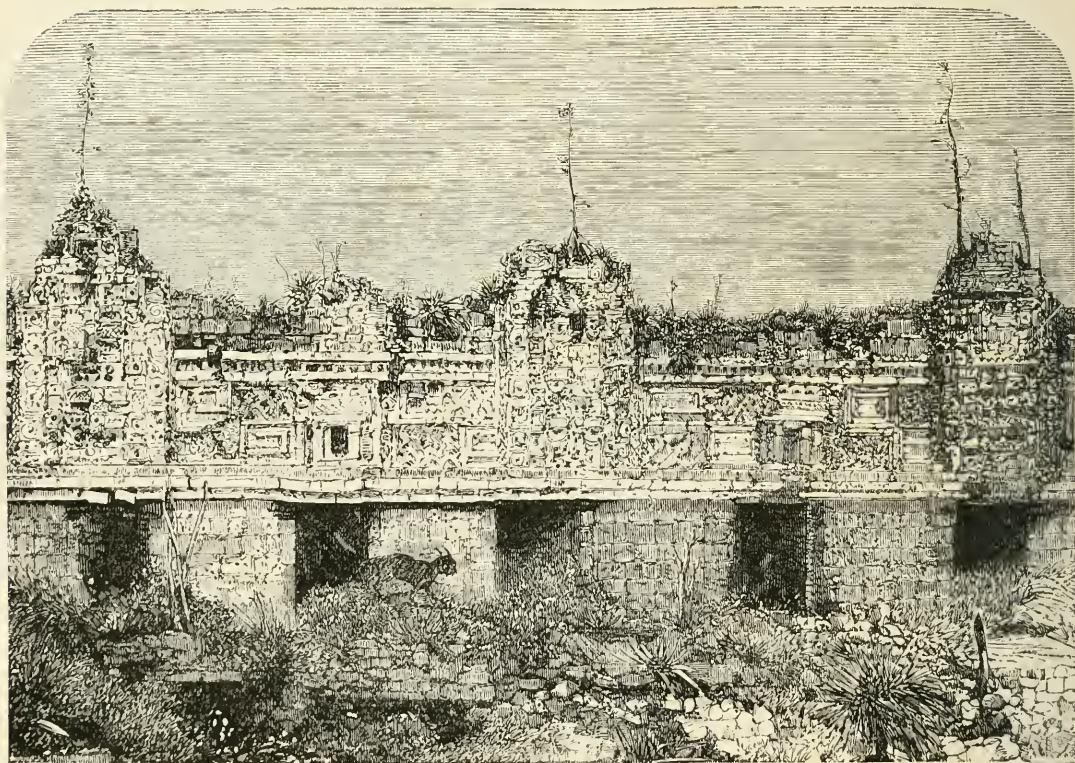
PLAN OF NUNNERY OF UXMAL (FROM STEPHENS).

by two transversal bars entering the stone hooks. It is the only place where I have observed this innovation, which seems to indicate a later epoch for Uxmal.

Phallus worship was recognised and practised both on the

plateaux and in Yucatan, and numerous traces have been found everywhere ; whilst here, a collection is to be seen in the Governor's Palace.

The Nunnery is the largest building at Uxmal ; if less magnificent than the Governor's Palace, its ornamentation is throughout exceedingly rich, varied, and elaborate. We give



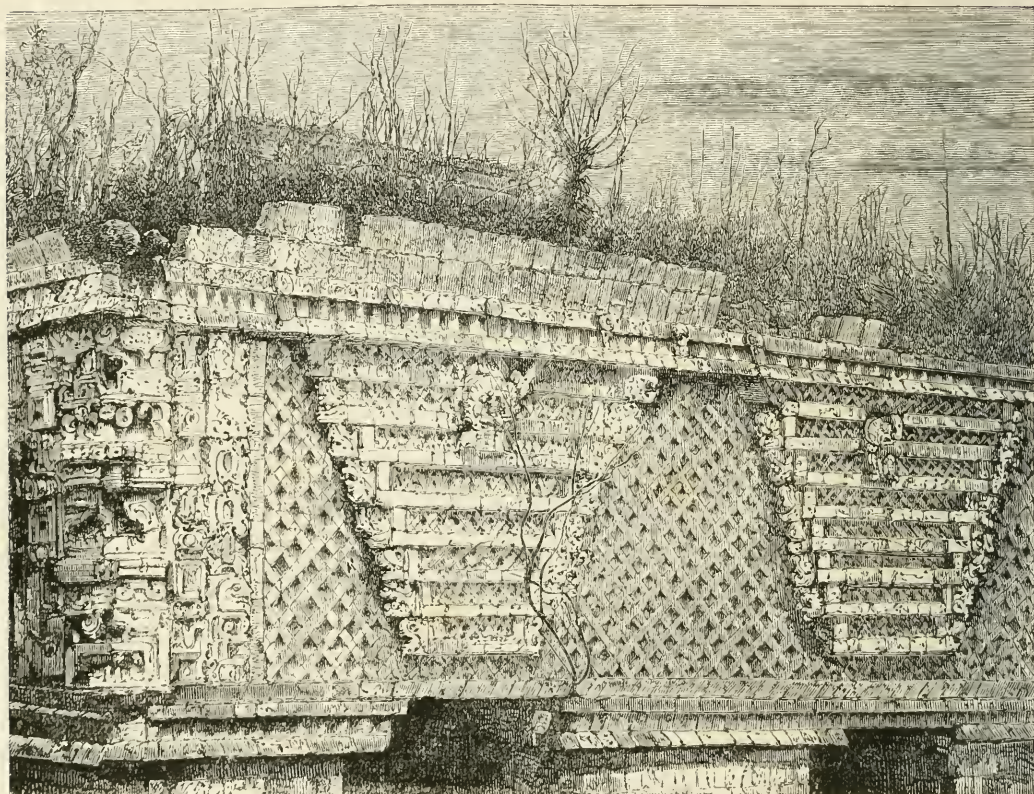
NORTH WING FAÇADE OF THE NUNNERY OF UXMAL.

Stephens' plan and measurements. This monument, supported on three superimposed terraces, forms a vast quadrangle consisting of four wings of different dimensions, surrounding a court 258 feet by 214 feet. The southern front is 279 feet long, while the centre is occupied by the main entrance, 10 feet 8 inches wide, with a triangular arch some 20 feet high. This side is less richly decorated than the rest. Facing

this entrance stands the northern wing, the ornamentation of which is wonderfully diversified, consisting of grecques, lattice-work, and bas-reliefs, representing birds and human beings, whilst small porticoes, intersected by pavilions with the usual superimposed great idols, are found everywhere. The southern front is reared on a terrace which is reached by a stairway 264 feet long by 95 feet wide, and about 25 feet high; it is pierced by thirteen openings, corresponding to a range of thirteen small apartments two deep. The western wing, almost entirely destroyed, gives nevertheless a good idea of its fine ornamentation. It consisted of a frieze divided into panels with the usual devices, and huge Indian statues in high relief; two immense feathered serpents wreathed the panels occupying the whole length of the façade, 173 feet from end to end, whilst the heads, and the tails with rattles, met at the extremities, like those on the table-land. The eastern wing is entire and almost intact; the front measures 158 feet, having an elegant frieze composed of stone trellis-work, intersected by serpentine trophies disposed in fan-like fashion, while towards the top are symbolic figures admirably treated. This side is severe in design, more simple, and in better taste than the rest. The Nunnery consisted of eighty-eight apartments, of all dimensions, varying from 19 feet to 32 feet long.

The Dwarf's House, also the Casa del Adivino, the Prophet's House, is a charming temple crowning a pyramid with a very steep slope 100 feet high. It consists of two parts: one reared on the upper summit, the other a kind of chapel lower down, facing the town. It was richly ornamented, and presumably dedicated to a great deity. Two stairways facing east and west led to these buildings. Padre Cogolludo, who visited this temple in 1656, is the first to complain of the steep staircase, which caused

his head to swim. He found in one of these apartments offerings of *cocoa and copal which had been burnt very recently*; consequently, fifteen years after the Conquest the natives were still sacrificing to their gods, and practising their superstitions in their own temples. That these edifices were entire in Cogolludo's



SHOWING DETAILS OF EASTERN FAÇADE OF THE NUNNERY, UXMAL.

time is beyond doubt, since the Governor's Palace, the eastern and southern sides of the Nunnery, are still standing. They appeared new to Lizana, who (1616) says: "These buildings are alike both in style and architecture; all are reared on supporting mounds (*ku*, plural *kues*), which inclines one to think that they were built at the same time, by the order of one guiding head, seeing that they are similar. Some look so new and so



THE DWARF'S HOUSE OF UXMAL.

clean, their wooden lintels so perfect, that they do not seem to *have been built more than twenty years.* These palaces must have *been used as temples and sanctuaries,* for the dwellings of the

natives were thatched, and always in the depths of the forests."*

This quotation is not indicative of very early monuments, while it shows that the similarity of the monuments was noticed and recorded by the first explorers; it will not, therefore, appear unnatural that aided by documents, when we write the history of one monument should be equivalent to writing the history of all; and that the architectural manifestations which are identical throughout Central America should be ascribed to one people, the Toltecs. The culture of a nation is gauged by their monuments; if so, where are the structures marking the existence of the Toltecs? Although of great solidity, and not four hundred years old, had they entirely disappeared at the time of the Conquest, and are the monuments we now behold the remains of ancient buildings unknown to them? But such a conclusion is belied by history and tradition. We will terminate these discussions with a few words from Cogolludo, who says of these edifices: "*They are about the same as those in New Spain, described by Torquemada in his 'Indian Monarchy.'*"†

Stephens has a legend relating to the Dwarf's House, which we reproduce: "An old woman lived alone in her hut, rarely leaving her chimney-corner. She was much distressed at having no children; in her grief, one day she took an egg, wrapped it up carefully in a cotton cloth, and put it in a corner of her hut. She looked at it every day with great anxiety, but no change in the egg was observable; one morning, however, she found the shell broken, and a lovely tiny creature was stretching out its arms to her. The old woman was in raptures; she took

* Lizana, chap. ii. This author does not take into consideration the abandonment of the cities by the natives at the Conquest.

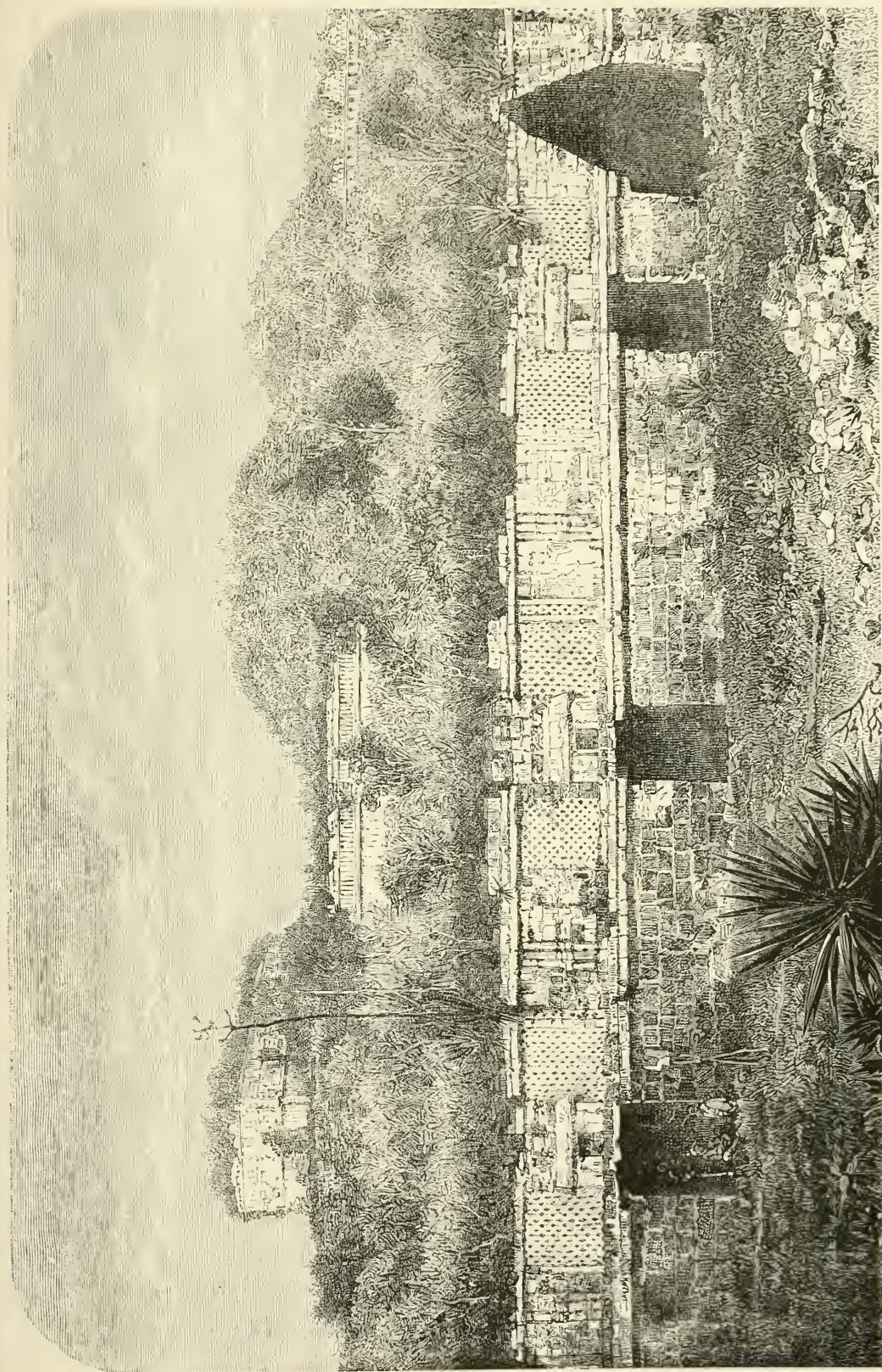
† Cogolludo, tome i. lib. iv. cap. vi.

it to her heart, gave it a nurse, and was so careful of it, that at the end of a year the baby walked and talked as well as a grown-up man; but he stopped growing. The good old woman in her joy and delight exclaimed that the baby should be a great chief. One day, she told him to go to the king's palace and engage him in a trial of strength. The dwarf begged hard not to be sent on such an enterprise; but the old woman insisted on his going, and he was obliged to obey. When ushered into the presence of the sovereign, he threw down his gauntlet; the latter smiled, and asked him to lift a stone of three arobes (75 lb.). The child returned crying to his mother, who sent him back, saying: 'If the king can lift the stone, you can lift it too.' The king did take it up, but so did the dwarf. His strength was tried in many other ways, but all the king did was as easily done by the dwarf. Wroth at being outdone by so puny a creature, the prince told the dwarf that unless he built a palace loftier than any in the city, he should die. The affrighted dwarf returned to the old woman, who bade him not to despair, and the next morning they both awoke in the palace which is still standing. The king saw with amazement the palace; he instantly sent for the dwarf and desired him to collect two bundles of *cogoiol* (a kind of hard wood), with one of which he would strike the dwarf on the head, and consent to be struck in return by his tiny adversary. The latter again returned to his mother moaning and lamenting; but the old woman cheered him up, and placing a tortilla on his head, sent him back to the king. The trial took place in the presence of all the State grandees; the king broke the whole of his bundle on the dwarf's head without hurting him in the least, seeing which he wished to save his head from the impending ordeal, but his word had been passed before his assembled court, and he could not well refuse. The dwarf struck, and at the second blow, the

king's skull was broken to pieces. The spectators immediately proclaimed the victorious dwarf their sovereign. After this the old woman disappeared; but in the village of Mani, fifty miles distant, is a deep well leading to a subterraneous passage which extends as far as Merida. In this passage is an old woman sitting on the bank of a river shaded by a great tree, having a serpent by her side. She sells water in small quantities, accepting no money, for she must have human beings, innocent babies, which are devoured by the serpent. This old woman is the dwarf's mother."

Uxmal is the only city where the monuments are so grouped as to make it possible to take a panoramic view, which the reader can follow one by one in our drawing. To the left, in the distance, is the "Casa de la Vieja," the Old Woman's House; next comes the Governor's Palace, showing the west side and about three-fourths of the edifice; more in front, to the right, the "Casa de las Tortugas," Turtle House, so called from a row of turtles occurring at regular intervals above the upper cornice. To the rear, a great pyramid crowned by a vast platform, without monuments, known as "Cerro de los Sacrificios," Mound of Sacrifice. It is on the plan of the Mexican temples, which consisted, like this monument, of a pyramid with small wood chapels containing idols and the terrible *techcatl*. The Toltecs, who did not practise human sacrifice, had real temples on the summits of their pyramids, like those in Yucatan, where they developed this kind of architecture. Consequently, if human sacrifices are met among the Mayas, they must be attributed to Mexican influence, and all writers agree that the monuments devoted to this horrible practice date from the fifteenth century (1440), and are of Aztec origin.

To the right of this mound is another pyramid, having several stories like the Castillo at Chichen, and similar monuments at



GENERAL VIEW OF THE RUINS OF UXMAL.

Palenque; it was crowned by a beautiful temple, now in a very ruined condition. Still to the right, but more in front, is the curious building known as "Casa de las Palomas," Pigeon House, owing to immense peaks terminating the decorative wall, pierced by large openings arranged in horizontal rows, which may well have served as a pigeon-house. It should be added that at Uxmal the decorative wall is only found in the most dilapidated monuments deficient of any stucco mouldings, showing an earlier epoch.

Fronting these buildings, on the second plan, are more ruins; the most conspicuous being the Tlachtli or Tennis-court, and the south side of the Nunnery with its main entrance, which gives access to the inner court, where traces of pavement are still visible.

An official document given by Stephens will confirm our views respecting these monuments. Stephens found it among the papers of the Peon family, in a petition from Don Lorenzo Evia to the King of Spain (1673), praying a grant of four leagues of land from the buildings of Uxmal, "since," he says, "no injury could result to any third person, but on the contrary very great service to God our Lord, because with that establishment it would prevent the Indians in those places from worshipping the devil in the ancient buildings which are there, having in them their idols, to which they burn copal and perform other detestable sacrifices, *as they are doing every day notoriously and publicly.*" And further: "In the place called the edifices of Uxmal and its lands, the 3rd day of the month of January, 1688," etc.,* concluding: "In virtue of the power and authority given me by the Governor, I took the hand of the said Lorenzo, and he walked with me all over Uxmal and its buildings, opened and shut some doors, cut within the

* Stephens, "Incidents of Travels in Yucatan," tome I. p. 323.

space some trees, picked up stones and threw them down, drew water from one of the aguados, and performed other acts of possession."

This was 150 years after the Conquest; but by this time the reader must be convinced that edifices, notably at Uxmal, were inhabited before and after the coming of Europeans; that they were recent, and that, broadly speaking, the monuments of Yucatan were the work of the existing race, erected at various epochs by the Toltec conquerors.

We will end these long discussions by a quotation from Baron Friedrichsthal, regarding the probable age of these ruins, showing that our theory was promulgated some forty-three years ago, not only by Stephens, but also by the illustrious German scholar: "Historians are unanimous in ascribing all the existing stone structures to the Toltecs or the Aztecs. The latter, however, did not invade New Spain until the middle of the thirteenth century, while no traces are found of their having migrated south. Aztec architecture is quite distinct from the Toltec, which a comparison of Mexican buildings with those found at Palenque sufficiently show; the latter being generally ascribed to the Toltecs by all ancient authorities. The evident analogy which exists between the edifices at Palenque and the ruins in Yucatan, favours the assumption of one origin, although different epochs must be assigned to each, by reason of the progress visible in their treatment. To fix these epochs with some show of probability seems to us, if not impossible, at least very difficult. A thorough exploration, supported by a minute and exhaustive comparison of the standing remains, coupled with a careful observation of the causes and circumstances which have produced or contributed to the state of dilapidation wherein these ruins are

* Stephens, "Incidents of Travels in Yucatan," tome 1. p. 324.

found, could alone throw some light across the darkness which has settled over these monuments for so many centuries." (This is exactly what we have done.)

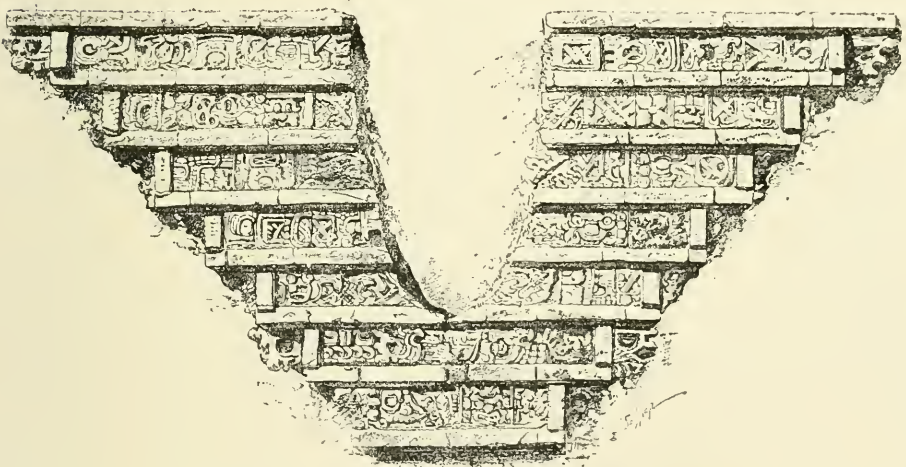
"The solidity of these edifices is not equal to that of monuments of other nations, which were built throughout the thickness of their walls with stones of different size; whereas the inside of the American wall is a rude mixture of friable mortar and small irregular stones. This heterogeneous composition must have produced the rupture or dislocation of the outward facing as soon as the whole was under the influence of atmospheric moisture, and the rapid infiltrations which were produced by its upper portions. Moreover, the calcareous stone used in these buildings is considered as a very inferior material, as seen by the progressive decomposition of those portions of the buildings which are exposed to the direct influence of the north-east wind, and the consequent action of the prevailing rain. Nor is this all. In the wood used in almost all northern structures, examples are met of resinous wood having lain buried or submerged, in a semi-state of petrification, over a thousand years. Now in the Yucatec ruins the cornices and lintels of the doorways, of zapoté wood, were exposed to the open air. This wood, although very hard, not being resinous like cedar, is attacked by devouring insects. For this reason it does not seem probable that these woods are more than *six* or *seven* hundred years old. If this supposition be called purely hypothetical, the thoughtful reader has a perfect right to form his opinion from more solid data, while I claim the same to express mine; not that I deem myself infallible—for, says the German proverb, 'Truth is only attained after repeated tumbles on the rocks of error.' " *

* Baron Friedrichsthal, app. to Cogolludo, book iv. Campeche, 1842.

American monuments, considered artistically, are but the rude manifestations of a semi-barbarous race, which it were idle to endow with intrinsic value, seeing that their original plans are wanting both in accuracy and symmetry, while their materials are ill-cut, their joints far apart even in bas-reliefs, where the intervening spaces are filled up with cement. Consequently these buildings cannot compare with Indian, Egyptian or Assyrian monuments; for here we have a nation who in the whole course of their political life, extending over several centuries, produced but one note, emitted but one sound; because they had neither traditions nor a higher civilisation around them to draw from. And, although here and there some happier mood is seen, whether in sculpture or cement modelling, their occurrence is too rare ever to have become general. The chief merit of these buildings lies in their interest for the archæologist and the intelligent, who are necessarily few; and this explains the silence of the conquerors respecting them. How well I remember my servant's strictures on hearing my exclamation of delightful surprise as I stood the first time before the Governor's Palace: "Well, I can't, for my part, see anything so wonderful in it; there isn't a French bricklayer who couldn't do quite as well and better." François, on his return home, would no more have dreamt of recounting of the wonderful buildings he had seen in the New World, than did the Spaniards three hundred years before.

It is with something of the feeling which is experienced at parting from a long-cherished friend that we take leave of the curious, barbarous, yet withal charming ruins, thrice visited with delight ever fresh, with interest all the more vivid that I have succeeded in lifting the deep shroud which covered them, and if on that account they are no longer surrounded with mysterious awe, they will not be less interesting.

We set out, directing our march through Muna, which has a fine well, seemingly of Indian construction. A native feast is being held, and here, as throughout the State, it means a grand opportunity for getting drunk. We push on, sleep at a broken-down hovel called Abala, and the next day we are once more comfortably settled among our household gods.



INSCRIPTION OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE, UXMAL.

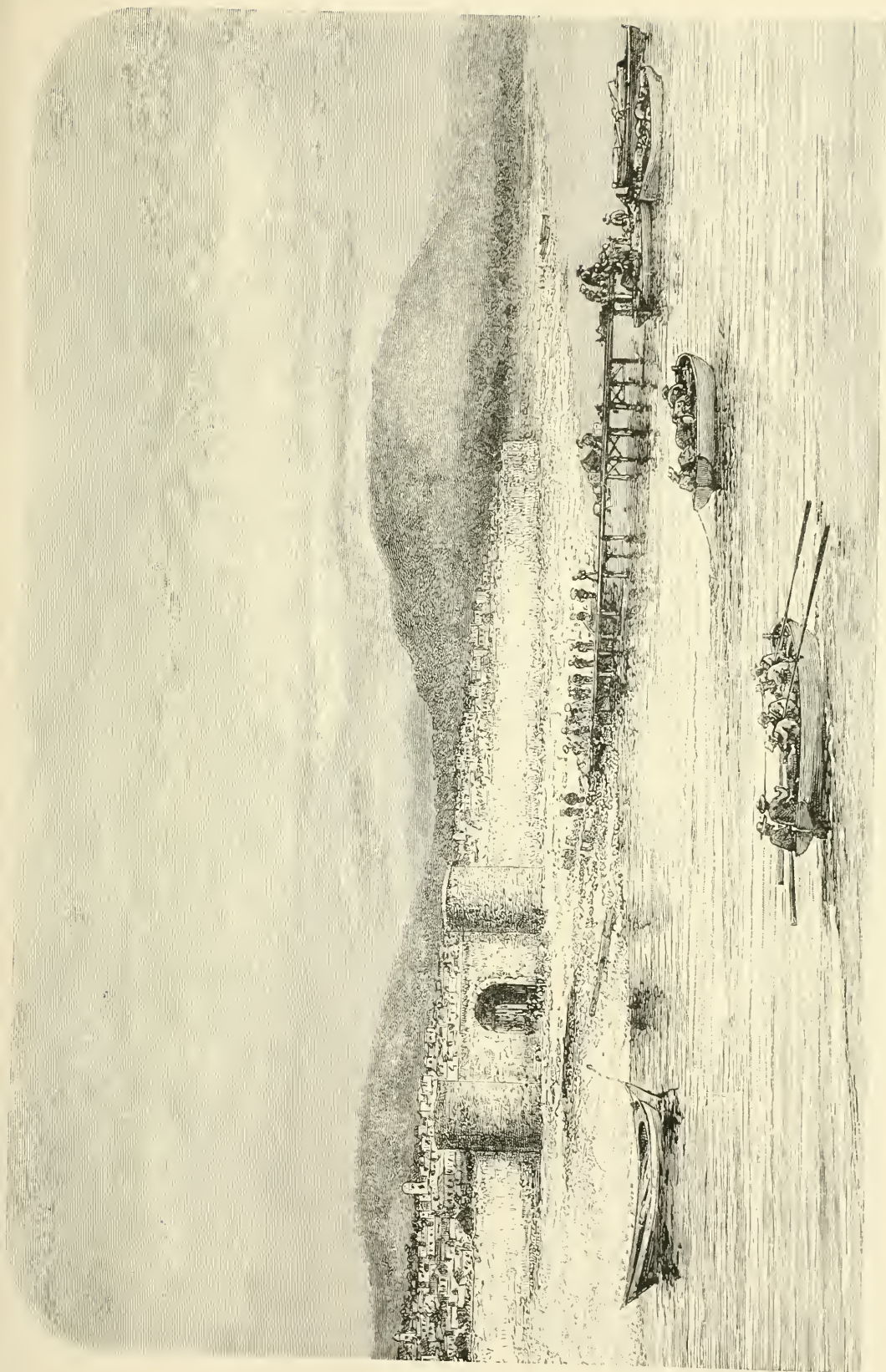
CHAPTER XXI.

CAMPECHE AND TENOSIQUE.

From Progreso to Campeche—Incidents on Board—Carmen—Old Acquaintances—Indian Guns—Frontera—The Grijalva—Tabasco Pottery—Waiting—Carnival at Frontera—Julian's Success—Departure—Jonuta—Monte-Cristo—Difficulties at the Custom House—Cabecera—Tenosiqué—Reminiscences—Monteros—The Lacandones—Our Mules Come—The Usumacinta—Sea Fish—Setting out for the Ruins—Route—Forest Camping—Second Day—Traces of Monuments—A Mule and a Horse Lost—Cortez—Arroyo Yalchilan—Provisions left Behind—Crossing the Cordillera—An Old Montero—Traces of Lacandones—Yalchilan Pass.

HERE we take our passage for Campeche on the *Asturia*, a diminutive, small steamer, having but four Liliputian berths; luckily enough we are the only passengers; had it been otherwise, we must have kept on deck day and night. The sea is like an immense sheet of glass, the heavens radiant with stars; our boat draws very little water, so that we skirt close to the shore, and are able to follow the graceful panorama which unfolds before us; and in the morning early we cast anchor four miles off Campeche because of the high surf, but the outline of which is plainly visible.

Campeche was built on the site of an Indian city, and visited by Antonio Cordova in his first ill-fated expedition (1517). "The natives," says Diaz, "were friendly, and took us to ex-



CAMPECHE.

tensive buildings which had in them idols and sanctuaries. These edifices were built of lime and sand. On the walls were enormous serpents, and near them paintings representing their idols, round a kind of altar stained with drops of blood still quite fresh. On one side of the idols were painted human figures massed in the shape of a cross. We were amazed at the sight of things so strange, as we watched numbers of natives, men and women, come in to get a sight of us with smiling, unconcerned countenances."* But the scene soon changes; osier braziers, for burning copal, are brought, and the priests tell the Spaniards to leave the shore immediately under penalty of death. The Spaniards sailed away, and did not settle at Campeche until 1541.

These ancient mounds, these temples, with their ceremonial and gory priests, carry us back to Mexico; but it would be vain to look for traces of such buildings along the coast, or in the proximity of Spanish settlements. In process of time Campeche became the most flourishing city of the peninsula, and was plundered several times by French and English privateers. To stop these frequent devastations, a strong wall was built around to enable its inhabitants to rest in peace. But the wall, built for safety, seems now to oppress the town, which has outgrown it, and is spreading outside, where wealthy merchants have "quintas," in whose gardens the rich tropical flora displays its magnificence, casting a multicoloured belt about the town.

Campeche, with its tortuous suburbs, its drawbridges, its unsymmetrical high buildings, is the least Eastern-looking place in Mexico, and boasts no monuments worthy of mention. Our steamer stopped some hours here, giving me the opportunity to

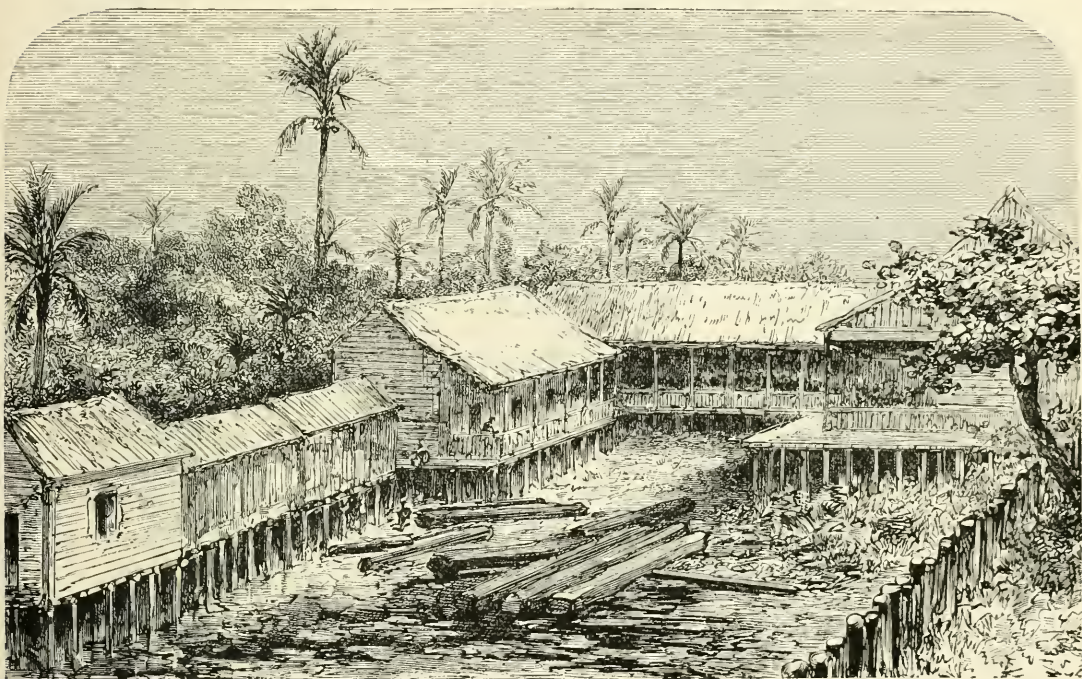
* Bernal Diaz, tome 1. chap. iii.

pay a long-promised visit to Don F. Ferrer, a charming correspondent, under whose hospitable roof I spent one of the pleasantest days I can remember, amidst music and pleasant talk. We returned to our steamer *en route* for Carmen in the afternoon, and I looked forward to having the whole boat to myself, when a large canoe full of people rowed up alongside just as we were settling down comfortably. "Oh dear!" I thought, "three days' voyage with a surplus of eighteen people, not counting half-a-dozen curs and parrots! If the *norte* gets up, what is to become of us?" They were strolling actors who had long secured all the available accommodation, so that we were given the choice of the deck, and it was with difficulty that I obtained for Lucian, who was prostrated with a severe attack of fever, a wee corner below. Presently his moans attracted the attention of the women. "What is the matter with the gentleman, is it yellow fever?" they inquired. "I shouldn't wonder," was my reply; whereupon the whole band made off and left us in undisturbed possession of our berths, where we slept the sleep of the just, and arrived at Carmen as fresh as larks. This place is the great depôt for woods known as Campeche, and drives a brisk trade.

I found my old friend Don Benito, who owns an island called Chinal on the Usumacinta, having mounds, tombs, or maybe basements of temples. Some excavations were made in them, when terra-cotta guns, 4 feet 11 inches long, with bullets likewise of terra-cotta, were brought to light. I was presented with some bullets, which are now in the Trocadéro. The only plausible explanation I can give for the presence of these guns in an Indian mound, is that after the great battle of Centla in Tabasco, in which Cortez' artillery wrought so much destruction, the natives tried to copy this new war-engine, but being unacquainted either with iron or the effect

of powder, they reproduced them in the material most familiar to them, fondly imagining that the result would be the same, and buried them later with their chief.

The journey from Carmen to Frontera takes twelve hours, where we land the very day twelve months after our first visit, and put up again at the detestable fonda. We learn that small-



HOTEL GRIJALVA AT FRONTERA.

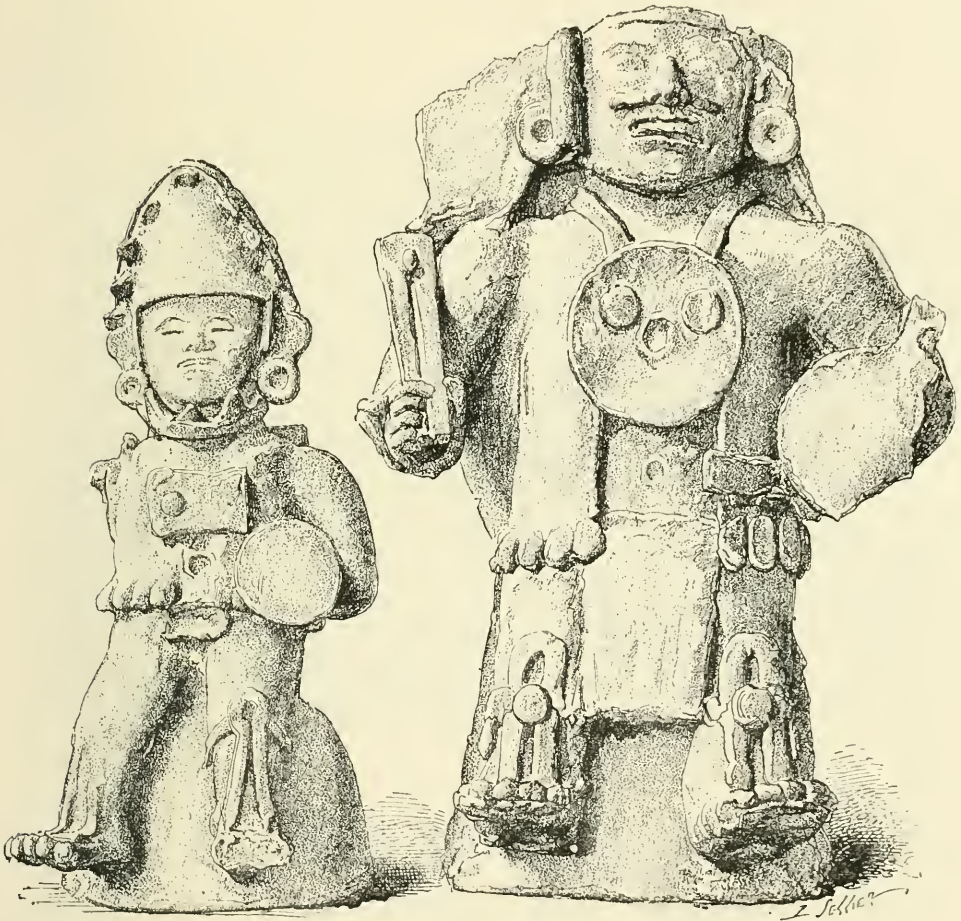
pox and yellow-fever have decimated and are decimating the town, but nothing daunted, for these epidemics seem to spare foreigners, I fill up the time I must wait here until a steamer calls, by collecting ancient pottery. Indian idols are of frequent occurrence in Central America, but up to the present time no one has cared to collect them, and the Mexican Museum does not possess a single specimen. Among those I picked up are various figures resembling more or less those of the table-land, while

their differences of style connect them with the idols at Palenque. Our drawing shows the two best preserved, and although very rude in make, they are not devoid of interest. The figure to the left is a Quetzalcoatl, easily recognised from the serpent surrounding his head, and is the facsimile of a stone idol at Capan ; while the larger to the right may have been meant for a priest or a "tecuhitli" knight.

We are in full carnival, the entire population parading the streets in ludicrous travesties, making merry with music, jokes, and quips. The Señoritas come to our fonda to get subscribers for the dance ; we give our names and follow the stream. The ball is kept up with much vigour, and Julian is soon in great requisition by all the pretty Señoritas, to the annoyance and mortification of Lucian, who ends, however, by declaring that he can well forgive his success, for he is an obliging fellow and such a hand at polishing his boots. These words are drowned in the tumult and cries of the dancers pressing round a man who has just been shot by his less favoured rival. The would-be murderer is taken to the police station, while his victim is conveyed home by his friends and the ball goes on more briskly than ever.

At last a steamer bound for the Usumacinta is in sight. We get on board with alacrity, and are soon at Jonuta ; but here the captain, on seeing the low ebb of the river, declares that his ship cannot go any further. After much parley he is persuaded to go on, but we are startled by a tremendous bump in the middle of the night, and find that we are stranded. We wait for the day, when, with a great deal of difficulty, we succeed in getting her off, and push on to Monte-Cristo, where the captain *nolens volens* lands us, protesting that his ship cannot go another yard. But our troubles do not end here. We are requested to show our passes, and as Monte-Cristo is not mentioned, we are in danger

of having the whole of our property confiscated. Fortunately I had a letter from the Home Minister, recommending me to all the authorities of the Republic. I took it to the Mayor, who gave me full leave to continue my journey unmolested.



TERRA-COTTA IDOLS OF TAMEASCO.

And now we turn our thoughts how to get to Tenosiqué ; we find that it takes four or five days by water, and some twenty-four hours by land. We procure a canoa, in which we deposit our baggage, under the management of our faithful Julian, who will follow as quickly as possible, while Lucian

and I, with a guide, take the road through the woods. We are soon left behind, and do not see our guide again until six hours later, when we find him reposing by the side of a running stream.

“Where is our lunch?” I roared out.

“What lunch?”

“Why, the parcel we put up before we started.”

“Oh! I didn’t know what it was, and I left it behind.”

Expostulations were more than vain, and we had to satisfy the cravings of hunger with a draught of rum and water!

We press on as best we may, and some hours later we reach a rancho where fresh eggs, poultry, and a beverage made of Indian corn, somewhat restore our jaded frames. Here we cross the river on to the right side, and arrive at Cabecera early in the evening, and put up at two old dames’, who regale us with chicken broth and fried fish, which, seasoned by hunger, we find delicious. The next day early we are at Tenosiqué, three miles distant, where we take up our quarters in a vacant hut, but, do what we will in the way of scraping and sweeping, we cannot get rid of mosquitoes, garrapatas, and other insects, which eat us alive. As to the food, an old man does his best, and I still remember that to give us some salad he had recourse to turnip-leaves; these naturally enough were hard to the bite, and hardly improved with bitter orange juice by way of vinegar. But the dearth of any green food made us gulp it down with a will to like it, and we almost succeeded.

This poor hamlet dates back to 1535, when a Spaniard, Don Gil by name, settled here. It seems to have kept its native character to the present day; for Don Saturnino tells me, that thirty years ago it had still a cacique, “tropiles” (subs), and a picoté. Of late it has acquired some importance, from

its being the great *entrepôt* of ebony wood, sought for in the remotest parts of the State.

We hear the most conflicting reports with regard to the ruins I wish to explore, lying some fifty miles distant on the other side of the Sierra, on the left bank of the Usumacinta. They were visited twelve years ago by the mayor of this place, "*when they were still held in high esteem*



A BIT OF TENOSIQUE.

by the *Lacandones*. A guard was placed over the temples and on stated days religious ceremonies were performed, but since the fall of a favourite idol, whose head lies now among the rubbish, the building has been abandoned." Cheered by this piece of good news, I direct all my energies to procure men, mules, and horses; the former we obtain with the promise of double pay, as for the latter we have to wait for their return from Peten. But when they arrive at last and I see their wretched condition, and the ghastly wounds

which cover them, I feel great misgivings as to their performing the arduous journey which is in store for them. Their owner assures me that with a week's rest the animals will be all right. I must needs accept his word for it, hoping the best, for there is nothing else to be done.

To reach the ruins, a space of some five leagues of forest will have to be cleared on the right side of the river, which will take us opposite the ruins, but a canoe must likewise be made to ferry us across. For this purpose I despatch some men in advance, while we fill up the weary time of waiting by trying to catch some fish. Curiously enough, a number of sea-fish is found here in the Usumacinta, 100 miles from its mouth; and when swollen by rain it brings from distant Guatemala large quantities of lobsters, together with pumice stones.

We set out on the 15th of March, 1882, and are soon in a tangle of wood and beset with obstacles of every kind; while the mules get unloaded, go astray, tarry in green pastures, and are altogether very troublesome.

We have left behind us the low marshy level, and are nearing the Cordillera, bearing to the south-east on the Peten road. The forest seems absolutely interminable with magnificent cedar and palm-trees, over 100 feet high, the trunks of which almost disappear under flowering lianas, while the broad-leaved Palmyra palms commingle with Brazil wood, and form boundless domes of verdure. It would be pleasant enough could one get used to being eaten up by mosquitoes and garrapatas. The stations where we encamp, although not possessed even of a hut, are carefully marked in the maps for the benefit of muleteers; they are always on rising ground, in the vicinity of water and ramon for the animals, their staple food on the march. Our day's journey has told already on them; the men disperse to cut down ramon. Julian is putting up our camp-beds, while cook

is busy with our supper, which usually consists of a kind of Scotch broth, made of dried meat, rice, and black beans, a round of biscuit, and a cup of coffee, except on days when our larder has been replenished on the way by a wild duck, a peccari, and sometimes a monkey !

In the evening the men, grouped round the fire, indulge in a social weed, while recounting adventures more or less authentic, then we all retire behind our mosquito curtains and rest our weary limbs on soft green leaves. Our slumbers are often interrupted by the roar of the wild beast, the plaintive cries of nocturnal birds, and howling monkeys. We rise before day-break, and what with breakfast, saddling and loading our animals, the sun is high on the horizon before we can continue our journey. No incident breaks the wearisome monotony of our progress, but towards noon I notice to our right traces of buildings, vast esplanades, the stone edges of which are still intact, whilst the guide says that towards the valley of S. Pedro, to our left, are entire monuments still standing—the town of Izancanac, perhaps. Indeed, the whole country is covered with ruins, to study which a lifetime were not too long.

The region is full of the memory of the conqueror. He must have travelled this very road on his march to Honduras. It was in these woods that, under pretext of a conspiracy, he caused Guatemozin to be executed. The young Aztec prince displayed the intrepid spirit of his better days ; he reproached Cortez for his want of faith, protesting the while his innocence. A tardy monument has just been raised to the upholder of Indian independence in that Tenochtitlan which he defended as long as there was stone upon stone, whilst not even a bust marks the presence of his murderer.

The region we now traverse, covered with immense forests, was cultivated and inhabited before the Conquest ; great cities

rose in this trackless labyrinth, the vestiges of which have been noticed by us, whilst frequent mention of them is found in various authors. On this route Cortez saw "a great city," with strong buildings of stone on the summits of mounds, just as at the present day. This city, known as "Bitza," had been abandoned on the approach of the Spaniards, but provisions of all kinds were left. When its inhabitants returned, Cortez asked why they had fled.

"Because we were afraid."

"What is the meaning of all these provisions? Why are all the crops gathered in?"

"Because if the Lacandones, with whom we are at feud, had come and conquered us, we would have done away with everything to starve them out. But on the contrary had we prevailed, we would have given hot pursuit and lived at their expense." *

Next Cortez passed a town, the environs of which were peopled with deer so tame, that the Spaniards could catch them by riding after them.† The country must, therefore, have been open to allow of the Spanish cavaliers giving chase.

Cogolludo calls the region between Yucatan, Chiapas, and Guatemala, *Prospero*, and says: "The natives of Prospero have their ears and nostrils bored; they wear in the latter a vanilla pod or a carved piece of wood; their hair, of which they are vain, is worn long and adorned with feathers; they also practise tattooing. They told father Simon that the country round was more densely populated than Yucatan, that they went by the name of *Locenes*, which means *apart*, and spoke the Maya language; that the other tribes were the Mopanes, Lacandones, Ahabes, Cihaches, Chinamitas, etc.; that the town of Locen numbered eight hundred

* Villa Gutierre Soto Mayor, "Hist. of the Conquest of Itza and the Lacandones," chap. v. p. 30.

† *Ibid.* chap. vi. p. 43.

houses; that the inhabitants were known for their clear complexion, their good looks; that they wore gold collars round their necks; and, finally, that many ancient buildings with stone idols in them, were found in the Sierra."*

Meanwhile our journey becomes more and more harassing; we have been obliged to leave one of the horses and a mule to the jaguars, and not to overload the others, Lucian and I ride in turn the only remaining horse. We cross the Arroyo Yalchilan† on the Guatemala border, not far from Locen, and leaving the Peten road, we steer to the south-east-south, on the path cleared by our men, and encamp on the bank of the running stream in which we lave our dust-travelled limbs.

The next day we climb the range of hills which divide us from the upper Usumacinta, and which are almost impassable for loaded animals. The sharp stones destroy the leather of our boots, and cut the mules' feet to pieces, while we are in danger of being lost down the ravines and precipices. The better to ease the mules' backs, we leave here such provisions as we shall not require, for game will not be wanting on our way, and everything will be safe until we return. A scaffolding supported on poles fixed to the ground is made, on which wine, biscuit, salt meat, and beans are deposited.

Here we encamp for the night—the sixth since we left Tenosiqué—and the next day we begin the ascent of Mirador and Aguila; the latter, although not more than 1,300 to 1,400 feet in height, is exceedingly steep and arduous. We meet an old montero, Don P. Mora, who left his native village three months since, and is living in the Sierra with two Indians, whose business is to mark mahogany trees ready for the market.

* Cogolludo, tome i. lib. xii. cap. viii.

† See note at end.

Don Pépé has built himself a hut on the Chotal river; he shoots whatever comes within the range of his muzzle, for the support of himself and his companions. The poor old fellow is reduced to a deplorable state by marsh fever; he volunteers some valuable hints, which I repay with a glass of wine and a few cigars.

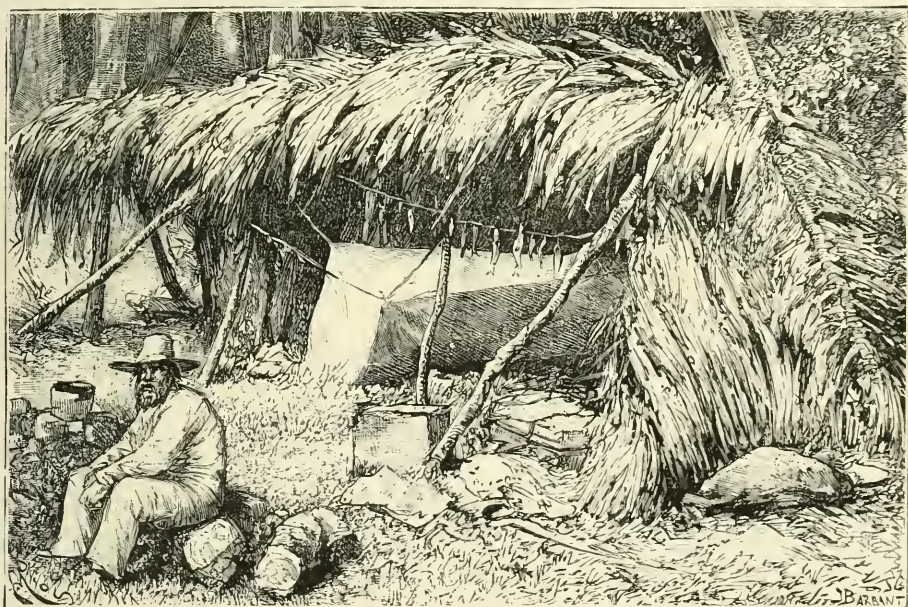


THE USUMACINTA AT PASO YALCHILAN.

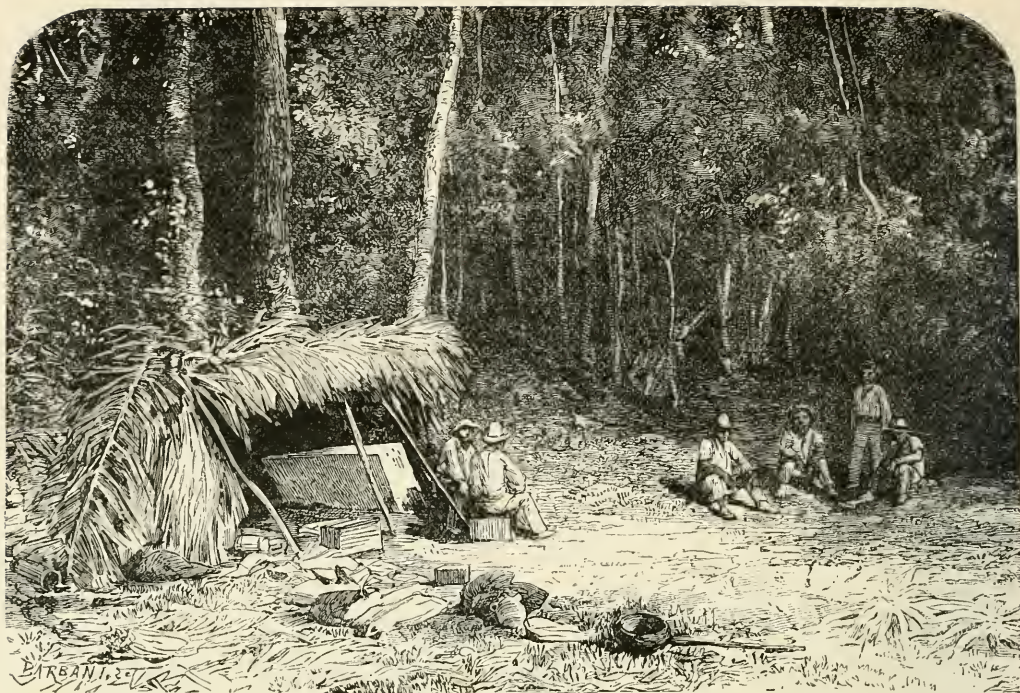
Some hours more and we reach the broad level, and set up our tents on the Chotal, a tributary of the Usumacinta. The forest round is teeming with life; parrots and aras fill the air with their shrill cries, yellow-crested hoccas* move silently among the higher branches, while howling monkeys peer inquisitively at us, and herds of wild boars rush madly

* The Hocco, or Powise (*Crocy allector*), is a bird nearly the size of a turkey, and much prized for its delicate flesh.—TRANSL.

past us. We are in the country of the Lacandones; here and there traces of cultivation are still visible, and huts which have been abandoned on the approach of timber merchants, plainly show that they were inhabited not long ago. We raise our "camp," *en route* for the Yalchilan Pass, and arrive in the evening on the right bank of the Usumacinta.



DON P    MORA.



ENCAMPMENT AT PASO YALCHILAN.

CHAPTER XXII.

LORILLARD TOWN.

Paso Yalchilan—Another Mule Lost—An Anxious Night—A Wild Boar—Encampment—Upper Usumacinta—No Canoes—A Difficulty—Deliverance—Surprise—A Mysterious Traveller—A Canoe—Fever—Down Stream—A Votive Pillar—Ruins—I Meet with a Stranger—General View of Lorillard—A Reminiscence—Stephens' "Phantom City"—Extent of the Ruins Unknown—Temple—Idol—Fortress—Our Dwelling Palace—Great Pyramid—Second Temple—Stone Lintels and Two Kinds of Inscriptions—Our Return—Lacandonnes.

PASO YALCHILAN is a geographical point, meaning any given place on the right bank of the Usumacinta, dividing Mexico from Guatemala. We reached it so late that we had barely time to unload our animals and get them some fodder before the night set in. But now I discovered that the mule carrying the material for our squeezes had lagged behind; but it was

too dark, the men declared, to go hunting for him in the insecure forest, next morning would be time enough. In the night we were rather startled by cries of "Al tigre! al tigre!" (the tiger). It turned out to be only a jaguar, but it served to remind us to keep a fire burning. The next day some of the men set to work at our cabins, whilst others went in quest of the wretched mule, which they found almost dead with fatigue and want of food. They also brought to the general larder a nice young boar, which was received with joyful shouts, immediately cut up, roasted, and eaten at our mid-day meal down to the last morsel.

Our shots brought the canoeros I had sent in advance to construct a canoe. My inquiries as to the work done were met with the unsatisfactory answer that nothing was finished; they had been unlucky in the choice of timber, etc. I immediately set out to see how it was, and to my great annoyance I found that hardly any progress had been made. In fact, the men had taken it mighty easy, had lived like lords on the supplies I had given them, varying their fare with fish from the river and game from the forest; causing me a delay which might ruin my expedition, for our supplies would not last out if this was the way they went to work. I was returning with head downcast, looking at the broad river, here over 500 feet across, pondering on the distance which divided me from the goal of my expedition, when I spied ahead of us a boat manned by a Lacandon, who on perceiving us veered quickly round. Fortunately one of our men spoke Maya; he hailed the man, promising him a great reward if he would steer towards us. He came to our encampment, and when I heard that he was a chief, I showed him the presents I had brought, telling him they would be his and any of his people's he should bring to me. We learnt that he had two more canoes he was willing to let us have

for a consideration, and I congratulated myself on being able to attain my end so easily.

We were now waiting with some impatience for the cayucoes, when a large canoe manned by three white men loomed in the distance; a horrible suspicion flashed across my mind, that they were men belonging to another expedition, who had forestalled me. The canoe came near, and I learnt that they had been on a foray expedition among the Lacandones, but had been unable to obtain anything except a few tomatoes, and were now returning to the ruins to join their master, Don Alvaredo, and that their provisions were running very short.

"Have you another canoe?" I inquired.

"Yes, much larger than this."

"Look here, my good fellows, take my card to your master with my compliments, together with half a wild pig, salt meat, rice, biscuits, and in return ask him to lend me his large canoe, which these men I send with you will bring."

The strangers rowed away, and I began to prepare for the next day's expedition, in which Lucian and six men would accompany me, leaving the rest behind to take care of our heavy luggage under the superintendence of Julian. But in the morning early I had a severe attack of malaria, which threatened at one time to delay our journey. A few hours' rest, however, and a good dose of quinine, restored me sufficiently to allow of my setting out for the long-sought, long wished-for ruins, which we reached in three hours, landing near an enormous pile of stones—a kind of votive pillar—rising on the left bank of the river, which has withstood the buffeting of the waters for several centuries. This stone mound was described to me at Tenosiqué, as having formed part of an old bridge which spanned the river at this point. But what we know of the natives' method of building makes this supposition impossible, for the river is too



LACANDON CHIEF AND LACANDON TYPES.

broad, and on the other hand, had a bridge formerly stood here, remains would be found either on the opposite side or in the bed of the river. There is very little doubt that for all the purposes of daily life, the inhabitants of this city used "canoas" just as they do now.



VOTIVE PILE OF LORILLARD.

We had made but a short way among the ruins lying in every direction, when we were met by Don Alvaredo, whose fair looks and elastic step showed him to be an Englishman. We shook hands; he knew my name, he told me his: Alfred Maudslay, Esq., from London; and as my looks betrayed the inward annoyance I felt:

"It's all right," he said; "there is no reason why you should look so distressed. My having had the start of you was a mere chance, as it would have been mere chance had it been the other way. You need have no fear on my account, for I am only an amateur, travelling for pleasure. With you the case of course is different. But I do not intend to publish anything. Come, I have had a place got ready; and as for the ruins I make them over to you. You can name the town, claim to have discovered it, in fact do what you please. I shall not interfere with you in any way, and you may even dispense with mentioning my name if you so please."

I was deeply touched with his kind manner, and I am only too charmed to share with him the glory of having explored this city. We lived and worked together like two brothers, and we parted the best friends in the world.

This town, which I shall call "Lorillard," in honour of the munificent man who partly defrays the cost of the expedition, rises on the left bank of the Usumacinta in the 17th degree lat. (see Map), in a region hitherto unclassified, between Guatemala, Chiapas, and Tabasco. (We are able to determine approximately its position from the bearings we took along our route.)

It was discovered twelve years ago by Suarez of Tenosiqué, and has been visited at different times by monteros and by Balay de Palisada. It has been called "Phantom city," from a passage in Stephens' Journal,* in which he reproduces a conversation with the merrý "Cura" of Santa Cruz del Quiché, who told of "a great Indian city four days' journey from Santa Cruz, on the road to Mexico, as being densely populated, and in the same condition as other places of Central America. He

* Stephens, second vol. of "Central America and Yucatan."



had heard of it at Chayul many years before, where he had ascended the Sierra, whence the vast panorama of Yucatan and Tabasco to the sea could easily be distinguished, and that he

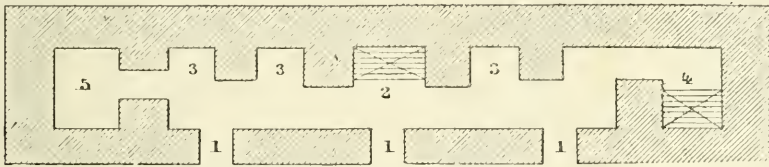
had seen in the far distance a city occupying an immense space, its white towers shining in the sun."

I do not think that this mysterious city, if ever it was in existence, is Lorillard, for its bearings do not agree with those of the American traveller; but there are many others in the forests, and monteros may come upon palaces which will answer the description of the "cura," who assured Stephens that the palaces of Santa Cruz del Quiché, which in 1841 were found in an advanced state of dilapidation, were in a perfect state of preservation thirty years before, and that they had reminded him of the buildings of his own country; that at Coban, in the province of Vera Paz, stood an ancient city (Utatlan) as large as Vera Cruz, now deserted, but almost as perfect as when its inhabitants had abandoned it. He had walked in the silent streets, among its colossal buildings, and found its palaces as entire as those at Vera Cruz."*

The number of buildings in good preservation at Lorillard was supposed to be twelve, of which six were "casas cerradas," and six without doors. Balay in his ground plan places monuments on the right bank of the river, these we were unable to discover; but we found more than twelve monuments on the left bank, three or four of which are still standing, having no trace of doors, just like those at Palenque where they were also supposed to exist. Owing to the distance from all inhabited centres and the luxurious vegetation which overruns these ruins, a complete exploration of them is almost impossible. Their extent is not known; but to judge from other Indian centres, the number of the monuments may be estimated at fifteen or twenty, consisting as usual of temples, palaces, and the huts of the lower orders. These buildings, some 65 feet distant

* Stephens, "Travels in Central America."

from the river, are like those at Palenque, supported on terraces rising in amphitheatre and resting on natural hills, which the builders made use of to save labour. They are, as usual, faced with stones, have a central flight of steps, but they are fewer, of smaller dimensions, and not so richly decorated as similar edifices at Palenque; but the materials employed, the inner decorations, the figures on the bas-reliefs with retreating foreheads, are the same, although more rudely built. The outline, however, resembles some of the Yucatec structures. It should be remarked that it is difficult to give a correct description of these monuments, for all trace of outer decoration has disappeared.



PLAN OF FIRST TEMPLE AT LORILLARD.

No. 1, Entrances with Sculptured Lintels of Stone. Nos. 2 and 4, Niches with Platforms and Idol.
No. 3, Niches. No. 5, Apartment.

The first monument we study—of which a drawing and a ground plan are given—is a temple. It stands at a distance of 487 feet from the river, on a mound about 120 feet high. I call it temple because it contains a great stone idol and niches which must have supported other idols, and that the walls are black from the smoke of offerings. The idol's head is lopped off, and lies amidst the rubbish; the face is completely mutilated, which seems to show that in the frequent inter-tribal wars, the town was taken and plundered, the temple demolished, and the vanquished gods destroyed. This we see in the Mexican manuscripts, where the defeat of a nation is always represented by a small edifice with a prominent cornice, which is entered by the invader a lighted torch in his hand.

But when was Lorillard destroyed? I think Villa Gutierre Soto Mayor* gives us an approximate date when he says: "That the Iztaes of Peten were at enmity with the Lacandones; that in 1694—two years before the fall of the



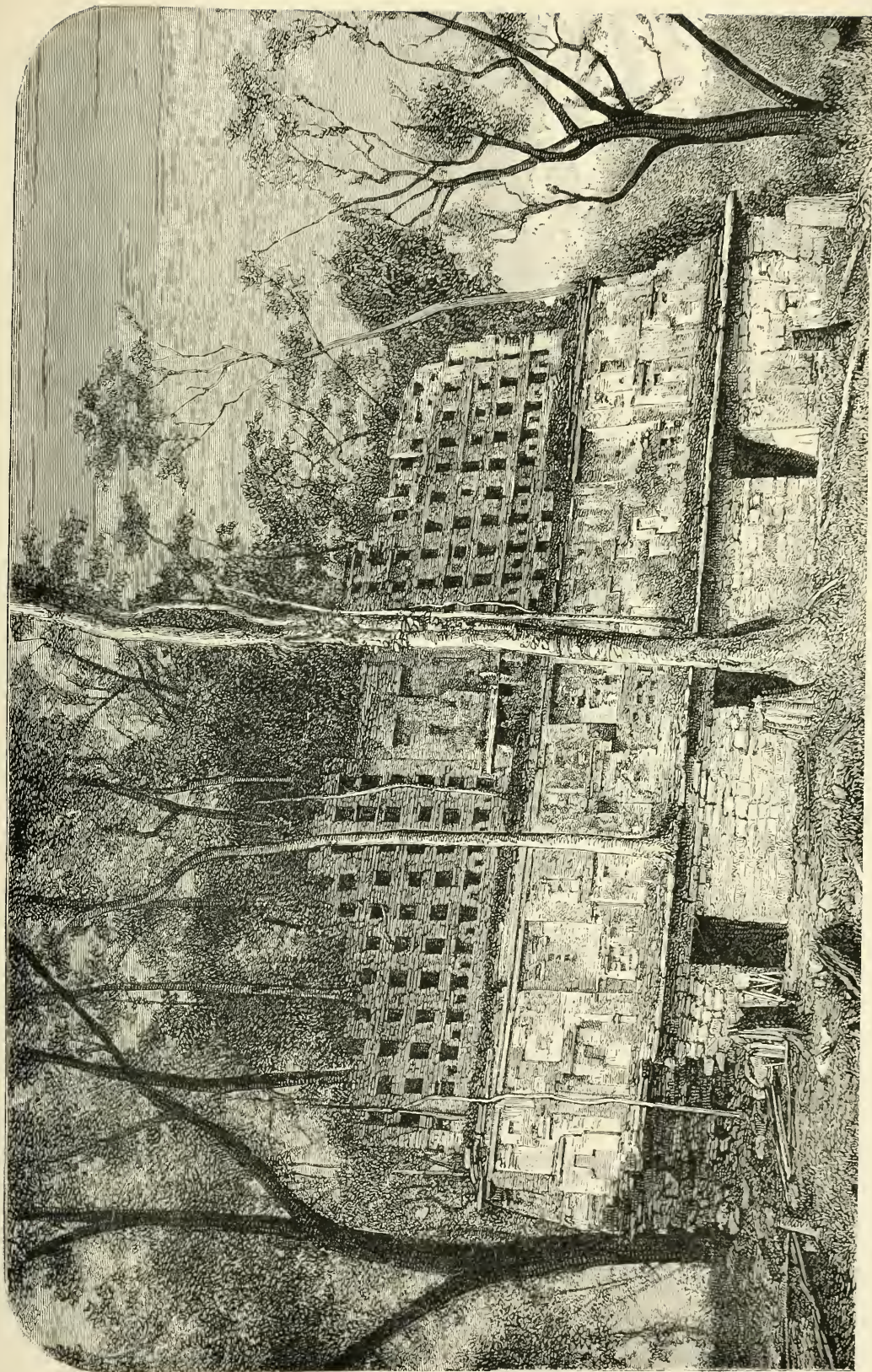
IDOL IN LACANDON TEMPLE.

city by the Spaniards—the former were making expeditions with fleets of canoes on the Usumacinta and Rio Tabasco, and that they plundered and destroyed the towns situated on the river." But if we follow Boyle,† the destruction of Lorillard would be much later, for we read: "The Lacandones are of the same race as the *Manchus* and very numerous; they were quite civilised a hundred and fifty years ago" (1730).

This idol is very beautiful and unique of its kind, for nothing like it has been found either in Tabasco or Yucatan. It represents a figure sitting cross-legged, the hands resting on the knees. The attitude is placid and dignified, like a Buddha statue; the face,

* Villa Gutierre Soto Mayor, "History of the Conquest of Itza," p. 285.

† "Boyle's Ride," vol. i. pp. 14-17, quoted by Bancroft.



FIRST TEMPLE AT IORILLARD CITY.

now mutilated, is crowned by an enormous head-dress, of peculiar style, presenting a fantastic head with a diadem and medallions, topped by huge feathers like those on the columns at Tula and Chichen-Itza. The bust is admirably proportioned ; while the dress consists of a rich cape embroidered with pearls, a medallion on each shoulder and in front, recalling Roman decorations. The same ornamentation is seen on the lower part of the body, having a much larger medallion and a fringed maxtli. The arms are covered with heavy bracelets. Round



LACANDON VASES FOUND AT LORILLARD CITY.

the idol, and in every apartment of the building, are a number of bowls of coarse clay of some 4 or 6 inches in diameter by 2 inches in height. The borders are ornamented with masks representing faces with flat or aquiline noses, utterly devoid of artistic feeling. Nevertheless *the difference of type is noteworthy*, and may point to *two different races*. These bowls were used as censers, for some are still filled with copal. Our cut shows two specimens. Similar bowls are found in all the buildings which were used as temples.

This temple is pierced by three openings, with stone lintels fairly carved ; its façade is about 68 feet by 19 feet 6 inches

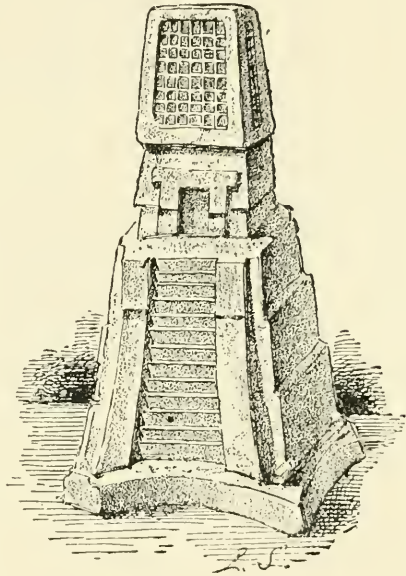
long, its height to the decorative wall is 17 feet to 19 feet ; the latter, of lattice-work, is 14 feet high, and recalls similar structures at Kabah, and more particularly the Pigeon House at Uxmal. The decoration must have been very rich, for in the central upper wall is a large panel which was occupied by a figure sitting on a bench which is still standing. The masonry which formed the body of the statue is yet visible, while a narrow long stone to the right formed the shin-bone of the figure's left leg ; a method of working which we pointed out at Palenque, Izamal, and Aké, and called the "cement epoch." Below in the great frieze forming the body of the edifice, three large panels were also occupied by statues, which were still standing. In the central panel to the right, the masonry which formed the bodies before the fall of the plaster is still visible ; while eight niches, in groups of two each, contained idols of smaller dimensions.

On the first esplanade of the pyramid is another building, which to judge from its inner arrangement was the priest's house. This temple is neither stately nor ancient, for hardly any rubbish has accumulated at the foot of the building.

We give here the drawing of a diminutive ancient temple in terra-cotta, to be seen in the Trocadéro, and which we found on the *Uplands of Mexico*. It consists of a pyramid with three or four stories, and a temple crowning its summit, with projecting cornices surmounted by a decorative wall, pierced by holes exactly like the temple at Lorillard, at Tikal, and the Pigeon House at Uxmal. The most prejudiced mind cannot but acknowledge the resemblance and similarity of design in the religious architecture of the plateaux, and that of Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatan, and Guatemala.

To the rear of the temple, on a much higher pyramid, stands the loftiest and largest monument at Lorillard. On its vast esplanade were six palaces, forming a rectangle. One of these

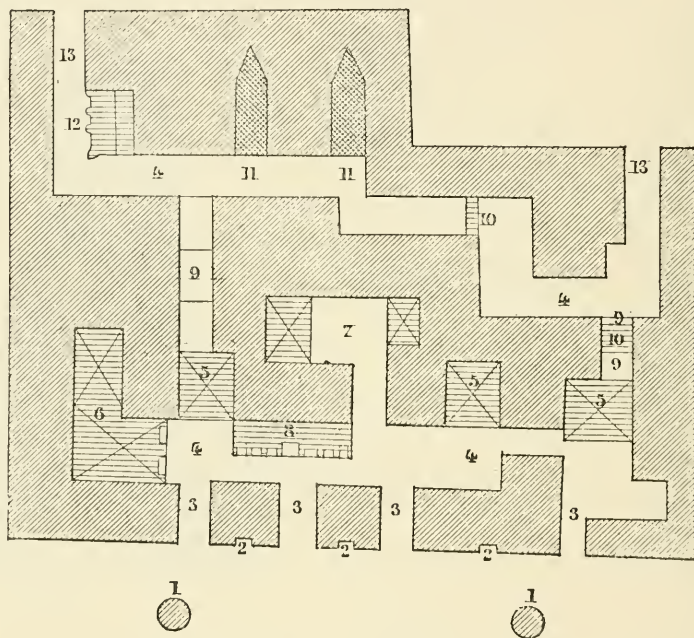
palaces, having stone lintels finely sculptured, is still partly standing, but so decayed that we could do nothing with it. As for the other buildings, they are a ruinous heap. The narrow openings had stone lintels, while those of the large entrances were of wood; this was probably owing to the difficulty of procuring blocks of stone of sufficient size for the main doorways. Remains of wooden lintels and zapoté wood are still found in the walls. This building, whether it was the cacique's residence or a fortress, is admirably situated, and from the upper terrace a magnificent view extending over boundless woodlands is obtained. It should be borne in mind that in an unhealthy, burning climate, dwellings on the summits of pyramids were a necessity for health, pure air, absence of mosquitoes and other disagreeable insects; that is the reason why we invariably find buildings of any dimensions supported on mounds and terraces.



MODEL OF ANCIENT TEMPLE.

The palace we inhabit is below the temple and on the first grade of the hill or amphitheatre. What remains of its decorations is like that of the temple, but ruder and more dilapidated. The doors are irregular, of different size, with slanting or perpendicular jambs and niches distributed without any order. The decorative wall which crowned the building has fallen in; the frieze is but a confusion of holes, niches, and projecting stones. The inner arrangement is rather peculiar, being a maze of narrow passages, small apartments having platforms of masonry covered over

with plaster, which may have been used as beds. Another long narrow platform, occupying the centre of the main passage, we thought was the dining-room, and was used as such. To the rear, in a subterranean portion which is reached by a very steep passage, are two narrow apartments filled up to the ceiling, which were probably tombs. They reminded me of similar chambers at Palenque, in which I found skeletons and vases.



PLAN OF PALACE WE INHABITED AT LORILLARD.

No. 1, Shafts of Sculptured Columns. No. 2, Niches. No. 3, Entrances. No. 4, Large Passages. Nos. 5 and 6, Niches with Platforms. No. 7, Inner Chamber. No. 8, Cement Table. No. 9, Sloping Passages leading to Subterranean Apartments. No. 10, Low Walls. No. 11, Filled Tombs. No. 12, Altar. No. 13, Back Issues.

The façade of this building is 65 feet by 52 feet long. Two fragments of sculptured columns, about 2 feet in height, the use of which is not known, but which may have been altars supporting household gods, or pediments for censers, are found in the front yard. On clearing the edifice of its vegetation, I found that the average of concentric circles, showing the age of the trees, were ten or twelve a year, just as at Palenque.

I may remark that virgin forests have no very old trees, being destroyed by insects, moisture, lianas, etc.; and old monteros tell me that mahogany and cedar-trees, which are most durable, do not live above 200 years. In our passage through the forest, even on days when there was not a breath of wind, trees were falling in every direction. In a storm they fall about in hundreds, and the journey is then most dangerous. Monuments cannot be gauged, therefore, from the size of the trees growing in and over them. Another feature of virgin forests is that they do not strike the mind as anything particular, and I know none which can at all compare with Fontainebleau.

To the south-west of our residence is another great pyramid, having circular buildings, which must have been a temple, for we found a great number of vases for perfumes, both on the ground floor and in the upper portion of the edifice. The body of the monument is of the usual type, but the first story (a side of which is shown in our cut) affords a new specimen of the Indian mode of building. We think this but an extension of the decorative wall; it consists of a narrow apartment and a receding passage extending from end to end, terminating at each extremity with the peculiar opening seen in our drawing.

We have also noticed a greater variety in the triangular vaults (arches) of these buildings, which are either straight, concave, or convex; sometimes the latter vault has no key, and the two walls meet with an acute angle, whereas in Tabasco and Yucatan, they are straight or concave only. Lintels are more numerous and richly sculptured than in Yucatan, but they are only found in edifices which we suppose were temples or palaces. The best carved are small, and seem to replace both the slabs covered with inscriptions, the rear of altars, and the sculptured pillars of the buildings at Palenque.

The first we give occupies the central door of the temple, and

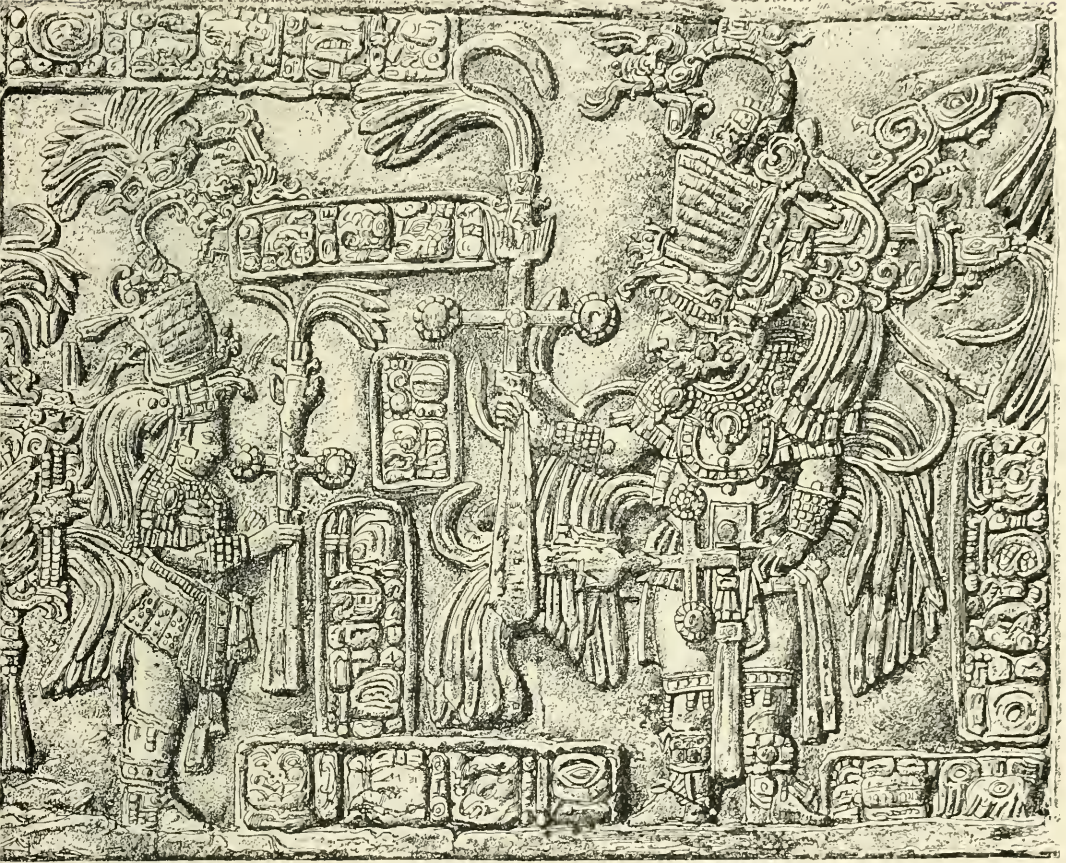
is 3 feet 9 inches long, by 2 feet 10 inches wide. Two figures with retreating foreheads form the main subject, having the usual



SECOND TEMPLE OF LORILLARD.

high head-dress of feathers, cape, collar, medallion, and maxtli like the idol; while their boots are fastened on the instep with leather strings, as similar figures at Palenque. They are of different size, and represent probably a man and a woman per-

forming a religious ceremony; the taller holds in each hand a Latin cross, while the other carries but one in the right hand. Rosettes form the branches of the crosses, a symbolic bird crowns the upper portion, whilst twenty-three katunes are scattered about the bas-relief. We think this a symbolic representation of Tlaloc,



SCULPTURED LINTEL AT LORILLARD.

whose chief attribute was a cross, which here consists of palms or more probably maize-leaves intermingled with human figures, recalling to the memory of his devotees the god who presided over harvests.

The two high reliefs which follow are also lintels from a small ruined edifice at the foot of the pyramid, of great interest and

marvellous richness of detail, than which nothing at Palenque is so minute. The first represents two human figures surrounded by a snake or volute, the centre of which is occupied by a cartouche containing four hieroglyphics. The figure to the left holding a sceptre in his right hand, with an aigret in his huge head-dress, similar to that in the palace at Palenque, may be a king, or more probably a priest of Quetzalcoatl. Both figures wear the usual dress, but the priest's medallion is a gem of art. The inscription, half of which is in a good state of preservation, is a series of characters mixed with the human figures, like the inscriptions in Chiapas and Tabasco. We think these two figures portray a ceremony in honour of Quetzalcoatl; for in the First Part of the Troano manuscript (Plate XXVI.) as well as in the Second (Plate XVII.), which are obviously dedicated to this deity, we find figures resembling that on our slab. It is by far the most wonderful monument which, up to the present time, has been found in America, and which we can boldly call a work of art. If we except the flat foreheads, everything is perfect in this monument; and nothing in the early manifestations of ancient civilisations is found more rich or better treated than this; as seen in the hands, the head-dress, the superb mantle of the kneeling figure, the dignified, majestic mien of the standing priest.

We said that this relief, and the edifice to which it belongs, were dedicated to Cukulcan, representing a religious ceremony, or rather sacrifice; for the kneeling priest has a rope passed through his tongue, whilst the other holds over him a huge palm, encouraging him to go on with his penance, and this is corroborated by Sahagun, who says:* "They pierced a hole with a sharp *itzli* knife through the middle of the tongue, and passed a number of twigs, according to the degree of devotion

* Sahagun, "Historia General de las Cosas de la Nueva España."



STONE LINTEL, SACRIFICE TO CUKULCAN, LORILLARD CITY.

of the performer. These twigs were sometimes fastened the one to the other and pulled through the tongue like a long cord. They were also passed through a hole in the ear, and other parts of the body ; but wherever they were passed, four hundred and even more were used by the penitent, which done, his sins were forgiven."

Torquemada also mentions these penances : " The priests of Camaxtli and Cholula, *i.e.* of Quetzalcoatl, under the superintendence of their elder, or *achcautli*, provided themselves with sticks two feet long and the size of the fist, and with them they repaired to the main temple, where they fasted five days. Then carpenters and tool-workers were brought, who were required to fast the same number of days, at the end of which they were given food within the precincts of the temple. The former worked the sticks to the required size, whilst the tool-makers made knives of obsidian, with which they cut the priests' tongues from side to side.

" More prayers followed, when all the priests prepared for the sacrifice, the elders giving the example by passing through their tongue four or five hundred twigs, followed by such among the young who had sufficient courage to imitate them. But the pain was so sharp that few went through the whole number ; for although the first twigs were thinned out, they became stouter each time, until they attained the size of a thumb, sometimes twice as much. Not unfrequently the *achcautli* sang a hymn during this horrible operation, to encourage his younger companions in the pursuance of their duty. The *achcautli* was wont also to go about admonishing the people to prepare for the great feast (sacrifices), and in *his hand was carried a large green twig*."* This green twig was replaced by a palm in warm regions,

* Torquemada, " Monarquia Indiana," lib. x. cap. xxvi.

as in our relief, the leaves of which rest on the double volute so often seen about Quetzalcoatl's mouth.

We read in Clavigero that: "The blood which flowed from these self-inflicted wounds was carefully kept on the leaves of a plant called *acxoyatl*, having a number of straight stalks and large leaves growing symmetrically."* Is there no connection between this plant and the palm of our figure?

Landa too relates that these macerations were common to the Mexican and Maya priests: "The Mayas offered their blood to the gods, cutting their ears all round and allowing the bits to hang down; sometimes they pierced their cheeks, their lower lip, or their tongue, and passed twigs through them."†

And at page 9 of Letellier's "Codex," in the National Library, we find opposite the image of Cukulcan, a painting representing a priest, passing *a number of twigs through his tongue*, whilst the blood is flowing freely.

We have seen that one of the attributes of Cukulcan was the cross, a symbol of rain, the fertilising element. "The cross," says Brinton, "is the symbol of the four winds; the bird and serpent, the rebus of the air god (Quetzalcoatl) their ruler."‡ This god was therefore intimately connected with Tlaloc and his sister or mate Chalchiutlicue, and that is why the three deities are often found side by side, sometimes mixed or confused, owing probably to their festival falling on the same day. § The cult of Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc was spread by the Toltecs in their long wanderings; consequently we find them at Lorillard just as we did on the plateaux.

* Clavigero, "Historia Antigua," tome I. lib. vi. pp. 154, 171.

† Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. xxviii. p. 162.

‡ Brinton, "American Hero Myths." Philadelphia.

§ Vide also Sahagun, "Historia General de las Cosas de la Nueva España," lib. II. cap. i.

We discovered in another temple two inscriptions on stone lintels, like all the other bas-reliefs at Lorillard, resembling those given by Stephens at Chichen and Copan, rather than those which accompany the figures. We place them side by side in the next chapter, to enable the reader to judge for himself. This is not the first time we have pointed out a difference between the characters of the various inscriptions we have published; but a difference does not imply dissimilarity, and can in no way invalidate their common origin. If we look at home we shall find that the writing of the nations of Europe has been greatly modified, and that the Gothic characters of the twelfth century bear no resemblance to the Roman type of the sixteenth. These inscriptions may belong to different epochs or different dialects, and we have reason to believe that the Toltecs of Central America had a hieratic writing which was used both by the priests and the military caste, of which proof exists in the bas-reliefs and the stone inscriptions, where the figures are represented sitting cross-legged, whereas in the inscriptions which we suppose to be in the vulgar tongue, and also in the paper manuscripts, the figures are squatting, their chin resting on their knees Indian fashion. There is a third writing, or symbolical character, which was used in the Aztec manuscripts, and also in Toltec and Aztec sculptures, to denote a man or a place; as seen on the tribal leaves published by Lorenzana, on Tizoc's stone, and on the bas-reliefs at Chichen-Itza.

We do not know Toltec writing, for the manuscripts which were read by Ixtlilxochitl, those found by Boturini, and interpreted by Veytia (so he affirms), have disappeared; but it is probable that their current writing has been preserved on the stone tables of Central America, where it was used as a hieratic or learned language, of which the Dresden and Troano MSS. are

specimens, but that they adopted the language of the regions where they established themselves.

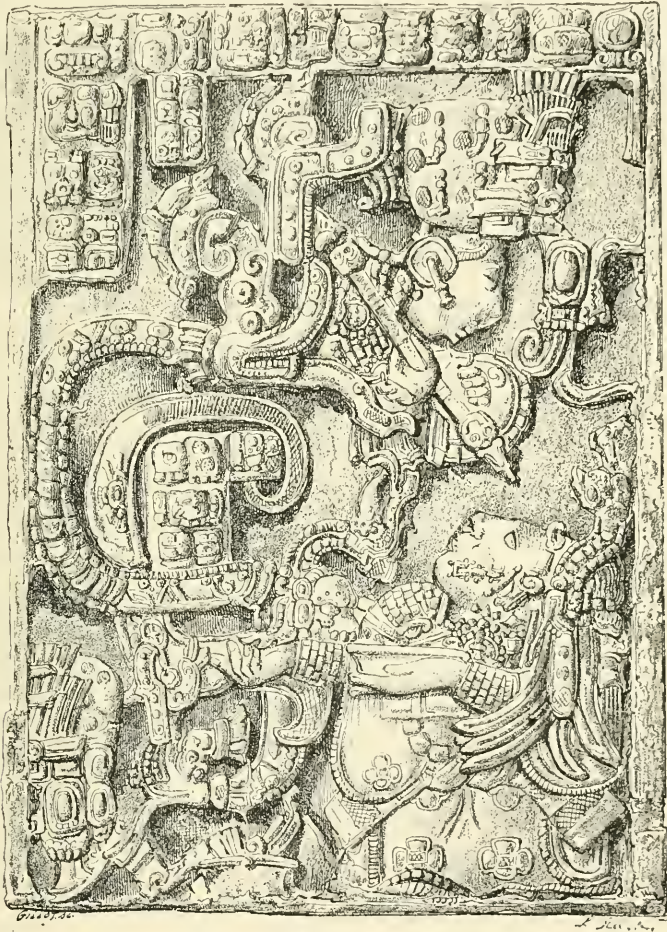
Egypt had three kinds of writing ; and in the inscriptions of the far East found at Ciampa, Mr. Aymonier has discovered a hieratic, an ancient vulgar language, and a dialect in common use at the present day.

Our work at Lorillard is done ; and it is high time that we should change our quarters, for Lucian, my secretary, is in a deplorable condition, brought about by the too searching garrapatas and other insects. The poor fellow is one sore from the waist, and it is a perfect wonder how he held out so long. He is unable to stand, and has to be carried on board our boat bound for "Paso Yalchilan."

I quit this newly-found city with deep regret, leaving a great deal unexplored, and treasures, maybe, as priceless as our Quetzalcoatl bas-relief. The care of making a complete ground plan of the place, and bringing to light the monuments said to exist on the right bank of the river, must, however, devolve on one more fortunate than myself.

The day after our arrival at Yalchilan, we received the visit of the old chief, who was accompanied this time by his two wives and four young men. I photographed them, and with the interpreter's help I succeeded in keeping them fairly quiet. They all wear the same dress, a kind of loose white tunic reaching to the ankles, made of coarse calico prepared by the women. That of the chief and his wives was dotted over with red obtained from a berry ; their hair is worn long and loose, and the women adorn it with feathers ; an enormous collar of berries, beads, bone, and coins is around their necks, and hangs down to their waist. They hold great store by their tunics and necklaces, which they would not be persuaded to part with in favour of European goods ; this does not extend to their bows and arrow-heads.

The same dress being common to both sexes, makes it sometimes difficult to distinguish men from women. The old chief looks sharply after his young wives, and this inclines me to think that the young fellows who accompany him are bachelors, and



SCULPTURED LINTEL AT LORILLARD.

that ladies are scarce in the forest. As a matter of fact, women are the main cause of their dissensions, and we witness here a real struggle for selection.

They still use stone implements to fell trees and cultivate the land, so that on seeing the steel hatchets, knives, and swords I

gave them, the chief exclaimed in the words of the Lystrians: "These are gods and not men, who give us such wonderful things."

The Lacandones wear no beard, and the hair that makes its appearance is immediately extracted. They are well formed and of medium size, but their flesh is flabby, their teeth decayed, and they look anæmic, owing probably to their forest life. They live on the produce of the chase, fishing, and agriculture. I am told that their fields are better cultivated than those of the whites, their cabins neat, and that there is no lack of tobacco, cotton, maize, and fruit. They have lost many useful arts which were known to their ancestors, such as pottery, which they replace by a variety of calabashes; nevertheless, they are far from being as savage as is supposed. Their cruelty is the result of their hospitality and confidence having been grossly abused by the monteros. I could learn nothing respecting their religion, except that before the discovery of the ruins by the whites, they used to perform their religious ceremonies in them. They are extremely diffident, and will hide in the woods at the approach of strangers.



LIBERTAD.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PETEN, TAYASAL, TIKAL, AND COPAN.

Departure from Peten—The River—The Sierra—Sacluc or Libertad—Cortez' Route—Marzillo's Story—Flores—Ancient Tayasal—Conquest of Peten—Various Expeditions—The Town Captured—The Inhabitants Disappear—Monuments Described—Tikal—Early Explorers—Temples—Bas-reliefs on Wood—Retrospection—Bifurcation of the Toltec Column at Tikal—Tikal—Toltecs in Guatemala—Copan—Demolition of Copan—Quetzalcoatl—Transformation of Stone Altar Bas-reliefs into Monolith Idols—End of an Art Epoch—Map of Toltec Migrations.

PETEN can be reached from Yalchilan either by going up the Usumacinta, which a few hours beyond takes the name of Rio de la Pasion, or through the woods on the abominable old Indian road described by every traveller. We elect the latter, which, although longer, is easier for our men, who will have mules to carry the heavy baggage.

About noon we come again upon P  p   Mora, who looks worse than ever; but far from thinking of leaving his post, he

has thoughts of founding a colony here, and has begun by planting orange-trees and red chermoias. He gives us a sac of smoked dry boar, we tender our thanks and bid good-bye to the good old fellow, whom in all probability we shall never meet again, and about four o'clock in the afternoon reach our first encampment.

The small river which has been our guiding mark is barely 3 feet deep, but its banks are so high and steep that our mules will only venture in after much coaxing, but once in the stream they feel so nice and cool that they are persuaded with great difficulty to leave it. As for the Mariposa entrusted with my wardrobe, notes, and plates, she laid down and completely disappeared all but the head. I thought it was all over with my documents, and was not able to refrain from a cry of horror; it was a false alarm, which, however, obliged us to spend the best part of the night round the fires to dry both clothes and photographs. In the evening we reached the spot where we had left some of our supplies; everything was exactly as it had been left, but we could hear nothing of the wretched horse which had been abandoned.

Next day we took the Peten road, and arrived four days later at Sacluc, now Libertad, the chief town of Peten, and the last inhabited place in Guatemala. It is but a wretched village, like all we have seen in these warm regions; it lacks everything, and we should literally have starved, but for some clerks, who gave up to us an azotea (flat roof) and part of their supplies.

Our road led east-south-east up to this point; but now its direction is north as far as Flores, some thirty miles beyond, which stands on an islet of the lake of Peten. This road is not far from the Sacpui lagoon mentioned by Bernal Diaz in his account of Cortez' expedition to Honduras, when the Spaniards "*passed a village surrounded by a great lake of fresh*

water. Near it was a river emptying in the lake, which was used by the Indians to go to the Sacpui lagoon (Chaltuna) and Tayasal, capital of Peten-Itza.

"The place," says the veteran soldier, "has white houses and temples which glitter in the sun and can be seen six miles distant."* It is clear that Cortez was on the left bank of the only important river discharging itself in the lake, for he dispatched five Spaniards and two Indians in a canoe to require the cacique of Tayasal to furnish him with boats to cross the river. It proves also that the march was much further south than Palenque, and that Izancanac was not Palenque and still less Lorillard, as advanced by Maler in the "Bulletin de la Société Géographique, 2^e trimestre 1884," page 275. His assertion is all the more extraordinary that Diaz' account shows plainly that Cortez must have gone up the S. Pedro valley to come upon this place, the only one which corresponds to Diaz' map and itinerary.

It is too absurd to suppose that Cortez, who was provided with a mariner's compass, whose route lay by Tayasal, should have abandoned the broad level and eastern direction to turn south and encounter the stupendous difficulties of crossing the abrupt range which divides S. Pedro from upper Usumacinta—a *détour* of more than ninety miles. In that case he would have approached the Sacpui lagoon on the southern and not on the western side, and there would have been no river to cross. We will give Diaz' own words:

"The villages towards which we steered were on an islet, near a fresh-water lake, which could only be reached by canoes. *We walked round two miles and discovered* a ford where the water was up to our waist. Here we got some guides, and

* Bernal Diaz, "Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España."

when Cortez, through Doña Marina, asked them to take us to the towns inhabited by bearded men, they answered that they were quite ready to do so. Five accompanied us; and the road, broad at first, became very narrow, *owing to a great river which discharges itself in an estuary not far distant. Here the Indians entered their boats to go to the town we were bound for, called Tayasal.*"*

The cacique himself came forward and conducted Cortez to his island, who left his wounded horse Marzillo to the care of the Indians. They, after the general's departure, offered him divine honours and the offerings of their idols, but the invalided animal got worse under such fare and at last died. The affrighted Iztaes raised him a temple and placed in it his sculptured image, worshipping him under the name of *Izimin Chac* ("thunder and lightning"), because, having witnessed some of the cavaliers shooting deer, they imagined that the flash of their guns proceeded from the animal.† The name *Izimin Chac* recalls the pyramid at Izamal called *Papp-hol-Chac*, "house of heads and lightning."

Flores, our next stage, is a lovely place built on the site of ancient Tayasal, beautifully situated on a great lake surrounded by a lofty range of hills. The Spaniards found the Iztaes, who had come from Yucatan, established here. All marks of sculpture and architecture have disappeared; nevertheless, we are able to reconstruct its history and show that the monuments were not ancient.

When Cortez passed here, the town still numbered among its inhabitants men who had come with the emigrant column from Yucatan, and this tradition was current two centuries later. They had preserved the ancient civilisation of the Toltecs, and

* Bernal Diaz, vol. II. chap. clxxiii. p. 374.

† Villa Gutierre Soto Mayor, "Historia de la Conquista del Itza," chap. ix.

used the same characters to record their history, which were handed down on manuscripts called "*Analles*," exemplified in the Yucatec and Mexican manuscripts.* "Their idols," says P. Fuensalida, "were like those of the peninsula."

Such writers as Villa Gutierre Soto Mayor, Cogolludo, and Remesal† mention various expeditions sent to subdue this gallant little people, which was the last to surrender to Spanish arms.

The expedition from Yucatan was in 1618, two monks taking part in it to convert the natives. They found at Tayasal the language, the manners, the customs and architecture of Yucatan before the Conquest, with a population of 25,000 to 30,000 souls, which would incline us to infer that the great cities we have visited were larger and contained more buildings than we thought possible.

"These temples," says Cogolludo, "raised as usual on pyramids, were of the same dimensions as the largest churches in Yucatan, and were capable of holding over 1,000 persons. In one of them stood the Izimin Chac, Cortez' horse, which seeing, one of the monks, Padre Juan de Orbita, filled with indignation, rushed at the idol and broke it with a huge stone." But this ill-advised zeal well-nigh caused the destruction of the troop, which was only saved by the friendly interference of the cacique.‡

There followed a second, then a third expedition under Martin Ursua (1696), who, on his march to Peten, found a place called Rohbeccan, "a city with edifices filled with idols."

* Gutierre Soto Mayor, vol. i. p. 500. "Their MSS. were written on deer's skins or the bark of trees prepared into a kind of felt covered over with a white paste. They could be folded like a map and put in a case."

† Remesal, "Historia de la Provincia de Guatemala y Chiapas," vol. x. chaps. iii., xi., xii.

‡ Cogolludo, vol. ii. chap. ix.

Tayasal was attacked and taken on the 2nd of March, 1696,* when the survivors of the struggle retired to the inaccessible fastnesses of the northern islands, their spirit still unbroken.

The more we advance, the clearer it becomes that if numerous towns were found deserted, it does not prove their antiquity, but rather the deep, universal hatred of the natives for the conquerors. This city had twelve temples in 1618, and twenty-one in 1696, so that nine were built during the seventeenth century; among the latter was the finest of all, described by Villa Gutierrez Soto Mayor in the following words: "The great temple was entirely built of stones, lofty and square in shape, *with a fine balcony* of cut stones, and two ogival vaults, each side measuring 20 varas" (about 60 feet).† This, we think, disposes of the *prehistoric* temples scattered in the forests of the peninsula.

This temple, although more finely built, recalls the Castillo at Chichen, the chief features of which are reproduced here on a larger scale. Is not this sufficient proof that the monuments were modern, and not the work of an extinct race? We find Tayasal a descendant, a daughter of Chichen-Itza, just as Tikal is its ascendant or ancestress; the latter will give us the key to the chief cause of the Toltec migrations in Yucatan, and will explain the Toltec influence visible in the cities of Coban, Copan, and Quirigua.

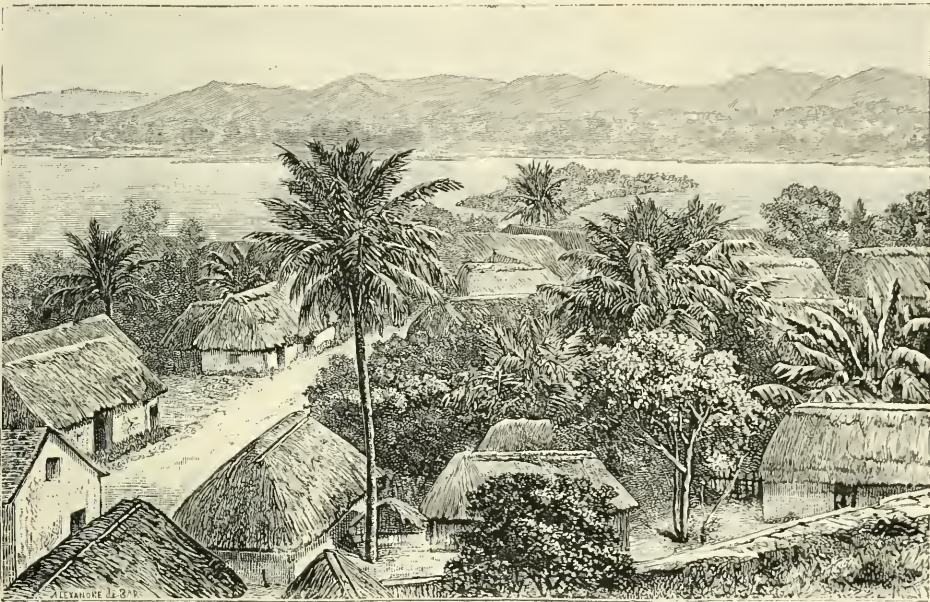
Tikal is forty miles north-east of Flores, towards the south of the peninsula. Two explorers have visited it of late; one is the Swiss Bernouilli, whose labours were interrupted by death, but whose documents upon Tikal are as priceless as they are interesting. They consist of twelve pieces of sculptured zapoté wood, which were appropriated from the temples and are now in the Basle Museum, where I was permitted to take squeezes

* Cogolludo, tome II. lib. x. cap. ii.

† Villa Gutierrez Soto Mayor, "Conquista del Itza," vol. I.

of them; many are damaged by the infiltration of water rather than time, nevertheless, a whole panel has been made, which we reproduce the better to elucidate our explanations.

The other traveller is Alfred Maudslay, who made Guatemala the main field of his interesting and successful labours. We borrow from his photographs and notes to complete our description. "The buildings at Tikal are of stone laid in mortar *smoothed over with plaster* (the cement epoch at Palenque, Lorillard, and



FLORES, LAKE OF PETEN.

Aké). The walls are generally 3 feet thick; the inner walls rise perpendicularly to a height of 7 feet, then approach each other to form the well-known American vault or pointed arch. No trace of true vaults are found, for the acute angle of the arch, and the enormous weight pressing on it, would not allow the walls to be more than 5 or 6 feet distant from each other; so that the interior of the palaces presents the appearance of long passages rather than apartments." (Exactly what we pointed out at Lorillard.) "The doors are square at the top and the

lintels consist of three or four pieces of wood. Within the apartments are also pieces of the same wood, but smaller, and placed across the ceiling 5 feet distant from each other."

Some of these small palaces are in a perfect state of preservation, but by far the greater proportion, the lintels of which have disappeared, are a ruinous heap. As usual, the edifices are reared on natural or artificial plateaux, the sides faced with cut stones. The most important buildings are the temples, which rise on high pyramids, the sides divided in receding ranges or stories, shown in our plate.

The façade is occupied by a flight of steps leading to the entrance of the temple, which is narrower than the terrace on which it stands, whilst the side of the pyramid corresponding to it is on a steeper slope than the façade and remaining sides. (This we pointed out also at Palenque and Lorillard.) The pyramid is 184 ft. at the base by 168 ft.; the staircase is 112 ft. high by 38 ft. wide, giving the pyramid a mean altitude of 90 ft.; the façade is 41 ft. by 28 ft. long and about 40 ft. high, counting the *decorative wall* hidden by vegetation.

All these temples are alike; the characteristic feature about them is the great thickness of the walls, the niches on the sides of the main apartment, and the gradual narrowing of the edifice from front to rear. The interior of each consists of two or three narrow passages running on a parallel line on the sides and abutting on the front corridor, with large openings and wooden lintels beautifully sculptured. The inner walls of the temples are higher than those of the palaces, whilst the vault, also higher, forms a more acute angle. This is owing to the great decorative wall crowning the edifice, the weight of which would have been excessive, had not the builder provided for it by thickening the walls, lengthening the vault, and narrowing the apartment.

"I met no idol, or any object of veneration in these temples," says Maudslay : a pardonable error, since he had not yet visited



ALTAR PANEL IN THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN OF TIKAL.

Palenque or Lorillard, which would have enabled him to see in all those pieces of sculptured wood representations of religious ceremonies, which replaced the idols seemingly wanting.

"In the open space or court which stands between the temples, are several stones of the nature of stelæ or small menhirs; some have their front occupied by a human profile and hieroglyphics on the sides. On others, both profiles and hieroglyphics were of very hard cement; the stone had also been smoothed over with it. In this court are likewise several circular altars, *facsimiles of those at Copan*. Some are scattered among the ruins, but they are generally plain, owing probably to the plaster that composed the figures having fallen, and left the stone surface bare. Circular openings of about 1 foot 9 inches in diameter occupy the centre of the square or court, giving access to circular subterraneous chambers from 6 feet to 10 feet in diameter. They were cisterns."* Our plate shows one of the temples having these stones in its court.

On comparing the edifices at Lorillard with this temple, it is seen that the frieze which surmounts the plain wall at the base must have had the same kind of cemented figures, whilst the ground plan at Tikal shows the arrangement of its monuments to have been similar with those at Lorillard. Thus we find at Tikal a *résumé* of all that which we noticed and studied in the various cities we have visited; but here we have a new feature in the altars, which stand in the open air, whilst the stelæ recall the votive pillars at Teotihuacan which develop in monoliths at Copan and Quirigua.

This analogy is plainly seen in our drawing of one of these stelæ, representing a beautifully sculptured figure, in high relief, with the usual dress of priests, grandees, and idols. A series of katunes, like those at Palenque, Lorillard, and Copan, are ranged on the edge of the stone. Unfortunately this monument is in a very dilapidated condition; but for the head, which is

* Maudslay, "Explorations in Guatemala."



TEMPLE AND STELA OF TIKAL (FROM ALFRED MAUDSLAY).

wanting, it would have been quite as remarkable as our high relief at Lorillard (see end of chapter).

If we come to details, a first glance will show that the superb

bas-relief on wood in the next page, is a facsimile of the panels to the rear of the altars at Palenque. The dimensions are almost the same, 6 feet high by 7 feet 6 inches wide; it also represents two figures in high relief, having the peculiar attributes generally seen on American sculptures. The hieroglyphics on the sides are admirably well preserved, and do not betoken a very ancient epoch, for they are just like those at Palenque, Lorillard, and Copan.

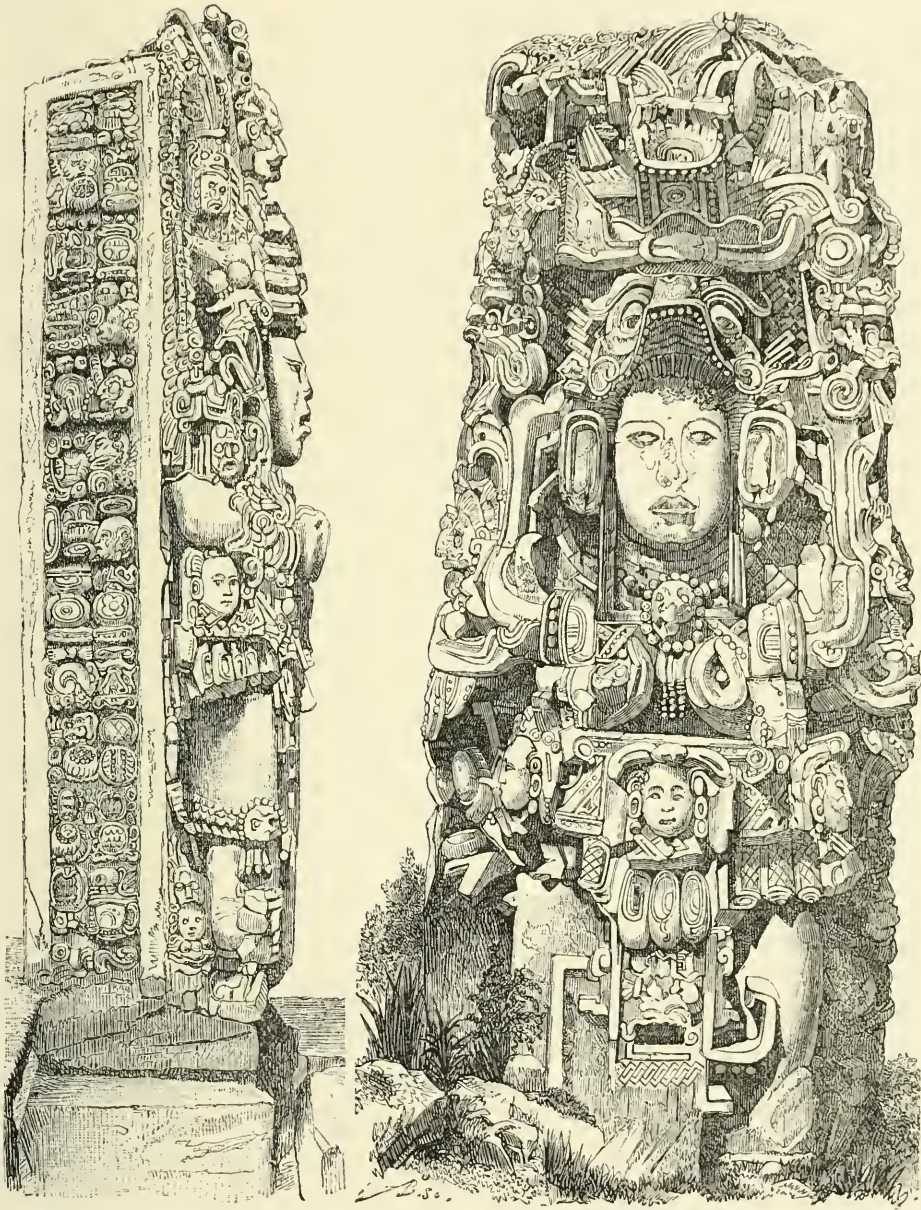


QUETZALCOATL AT COPAN.

Unlike similar reliefs at Palenque, where the idol formed the central subject, here it is replaced by a standing human figure, having an elaborate head-dress with fantastic ornaments and huge feathers, recalling Tabasco and Yucatan. In his hand is carried a sceptre topped by a bird's tail, and the rosette we noticed on the crosses at Lorillard, whilst his left arm is almost hidden by a shield; he wears the usual fringed cape, heavy collar, and large medallion; under this is seen a rich mantle reaching almost to the ground;

garters and buckles are around his legs, and shoes cover his feet. The Buddhic religious cloak is seen also on the kneeling priest at Lorillard, and the maniple on the arm is a facsimile of one in the palace at Kabah.

To the right below the inscription are symbolic ornaments, and towards the lower extremity two superb human profiles. Under the left inscription is a figure with a monstrous head, sitting on a stool ornamented with arms, with a back of peculiar shape. Many of the ornaments on this panel are of unknown



IDOLS OF COPAN (FROM STEPHENS).

signification, but a large portion is quite familiar and has been already reproduced by us. The most important figure of all is that to the top of the bas-relief, above the central figure. It is a mask with protruding tongue representing the sun, like

that of the Mexican calendar and the central figure over the altar in the Temple of the Sun at Palenque. The flames on the sides of the mask indicate this plainly. Clearly this magnificent bas-relief belonged to a temple dedicated to that great Toltec deity.

We know that the worship of the sun was general with all the American tribes, and if at Tikal we call him the god of one particular race, it is owing to the details which surround him; both pyramids, temples, inscriptions, figures, and emblems particularise him, and give us the right to connect him with the religion of the Uplands and call him Toltec.

We have other panels consisting of scattered pieces collected in various monuments. Some of the inscriptions are in perfect condition, and furnish important analogies. One is a human profile, like the sculptured figures on the great monoliths at Copan; another has fine inscriptions and a characteristic tiger's head, whilst below is a figure of the usual type and dress sitting on a throne admirably carved. These reliefs are in the Trocadéro.

To sum up, Tikal is a town which belongs to the Toltec civilisation, the march of which we have followed from their first homes to Ocosingo, Lorillard, and Tikal in Yucatan, where they met, both in the south and north of Guatemala, the first branch, but Tikal being farthest from the starting-point must necessarily be younger than the cities already described; to us, however, it is one of the most important epochs in this original civilisation, inasmuch as it is an intermediary station, a place whence the race branched off, a fact which solves questions and clears up events not hitherto understood.

From Tikal the civilising column advanced towards the north of the peninsula. Material proofs of this exist in the cities ranged on its line of march, for instance, Nohbeccan, seen

by Ursua, and also in the historical data, which the reader may see in our chapter on Chichen-Itza.

The uniform expression of the faces in these bas-reliefs is generally calm and pleasant, as at Palenque, where we pointed out that after the almost total extermination of their race, the Toltecs ceased to be a warlike nation and became missionaries of civilisation, bringing the population around them into submission by their persuasive preaching, like the priests of Buddha in India and Java, adopting the language of their disciples, and building marvellous temples in honour of the gods they preached. The bas-reliefs at Palenque, Lorillard, and Tikal tell this story very plainly.

The arrival of the Toltecs in the south of Yucatan is thus placed beyond a doubt; but the explanation given of the abandonment of Chichen by its inhabitants is highly unsatisfactory. That exodus, produced by secondary causes, was determined by the still living tradition that establishments had been formed by their ancestors in the south of the peninsula, and that Tikal, which at that time was perhaps still standing, formed the chief centre. It is more than probable that the caciques of Chichen had kept up some intercourse with one of the cradles of their family, and when they set their face in that direction, it was but an instinctive yearning to return to Peten. To the same Toltec branch is due also the colonisation and civilisation of the north of Guatemala, Tikal being the central point, whence some directed their march north, whilst others went south.

If we are to believe the priest of Quiché, "he saw at Coban a great city which filled him with astonishment." We have heard nothing of such a place, nor has any other traveller; but if we follow the affiliation, it is highly probable that Coban was a station of the Tikal-Toltec branch, which from this point

went east, where they founded Copan and Quirigua in the province of Chiquimula. Copan was standing at the Conquest, as well as Utatlan, Atitlan, Xelahu, Patinamit, and several other Guatemalec cities, which were destroyed by Alvarado. Copan was forced to yield after a desperate struggle to Hernandez de Chaves, one of his lieutenants (1530), and Juarros tells us that Fuentes visited it in 1700, when "the Great Circus still remained entire."

We follow Stephens* in the description and illustration of these monuments, and find that the most remarkable are monolith idols, which are only the development of the stelæ and monoliths at Tikal, and that the inscriptions, bas-reliefs, and idols are like those of the places we have already described, except that they seem to us to belong to a later period, contrary to Stephens, who assigned an original civilisation to them. But Stephens began at the wrong end when he made Copan the first scene of his investigations, and that accounts for his want of insight in not having perceived that these monuments were the outcome of an old civilisation. Later, his better informed judgment enabled him to grapple with the difficulties, and arrive at the truth. We claim but to be his disciple.

The first drawing is a finely sculptured head, which he calls a king; but this bearded man, whose head is locked in a huge serpent's jaw, whose head-dress consists of wreathed serpents, or a Guatemalec turban, is a personification of Quetzalcoatl, and though the type is somewhat changed the attributes are unmistakable.

We have no reliable description of the monuments at Copan; but from what Stephens says of them, they seem to differ from those we have explored. Juarros' description of Santa Cruz

* "Incidents of Travels in Central America," vol. 1. p. 153.

del Quiché, Utatlan, and other Guatemalto-Toltec centres, recalls Mexican cities, which may well be, since they were situated also on plateaux, and must necessarily have had a different appearance from those of the warm regions.

The Toltec branch of the Pacific, although influenced by their surroundings, had preserved the traditions of Anahuac, and reproduced the buildings and the same mode of living suggested by the resemblance of their present to that of their former homes. But these two branches met for the first time at Copan, shown in the mixture of the two different styles, where the palaces and temples seem to us Guatemalto-Toltec, whilst the idols are Tzendal-Toltec, and the stone bas-reliefs of our temples are replaced here and at Quirigua by enormous monoliths of 12 to 20 feet high by 4 wide and 3 feet thick.

At Kabah, which we think coeval with Copan, we noticed the exaggerated ornamentation which marks two different epochs; the same thing happened here, and is a new instance of a general tendency, which may almost be called a law; nor is it necessary to be an archæologist to affirm of these monuments, that they are not the beginning but the end of an art, for here we see monoliths loaded with all the ornaments and architectural designs which at an earlier epoch had spread over idols, bas-reliefs, and palaces.

The inscriptions not only retain the ancient characters, in which faces and human figures were intermingled, but they sometimes entirely consist of human figures grouped in the most violent postures. This is not all: the same idol personifies several deities, shown in the first we reproduce, where the great central figure, having a woman's head, emerges from a dragon's jaw, recalling Quetzalcoatl; whilst the band which surrounds his loins consists of human figures, ranged over a wreath of maize, showing the attributes of the Tlaloc at Palenque, and also of Chalchihuitlicue and Centeotl, the Mexican Ceres.



MONOLITH IDOL OF COPAN (FROM STEPHENS).

The decorative designs of these monuments show at a glance their correlation with the bas-reliefs and monuments introduced earlier in this work. They generally consist of volutes, and the

head of a small monster offered by one of the figures to a symbolic bird, as in the cross at Palenque, and a similar figure in the



GUATEMALTO-TOLTEC ALTAR OF COPAN (STEPHENS).

Temple of the Sun; some of the details belong to Lorillard, whilst others are like the wood bas-reliefs at Tikal.

But we will yet take another idol, the better to show these



OTHER SIDE OF SAME ALTAR.

analogies. The figure stands square instead of being carved in profile; the forehead, like that in the Temple of the Sun at Tikal, is less retreating, whilst the head-dress recalls both Tikal, Yucatan, and Lorillard. The ornaments are of the usual type, and the petticoat of the goddess has the diamond design which we saw

at Palenque and in the Uplands. The sides of the idol are covered with a series of characters like those on the bas-reliefs at Lorillard, Tikal, and Palenque; the affiliation cannot be controverted.

Again, let us take Stephens' interesting altar, 6 feet long by 4 feet high. The top is divided into thirty-six tablets of hieroglyphics; whilst the sides are sculptured with human figures in profile, seated cross-legged on a kind of cushion, having a turban or Guatemalec head-dress, with the cranial deformation much diminished, as in the idols. These new types, mixed with others familiar to us, are due to the immigrant Toltec tribes who met after two centuries of wandering, so that this monument shows both: the figures being Quiché-Toltec or Guatemalto-Toltec, whilst the symbolical characters are pure Toltec; the latter, be they near the figure, on his dress, or his seat, give the names and titles of the beings they serve to decorate.

Palacio recognised the Toltec civilisation at Copan, since in a letter to Philip II. (1576), "he found these monuments in ruins, but superior to any edifice of the same nature built by the inhabitants of these regions." Their traditions make them attribute these edifices to *emigrants from Yucatan*, which he thinks probable, "because of the resemblance between these monuments and those he met in Yucatan and Tabasco."* Consequently we see at Copan the end of an old art mixed with another equally old, the combination of which produces a new manifestation in the American civilisation. It is idle to speculate how it would have developed had it not been stopped in its inspiration and destroyed by the arrival of the Spaniards.

* Bancroft says that Palacio "had *heard* of monuments in Yucatan and Tabasco."

We follow Veytia in tracing the migratory movements of the Toltecs from the north-west as far as Tula: but from this point we mark their march towards the south after the breaking up of their empire. Torquemada mentions a sub-division, which



ALTAR INSCRIPTION OF COPAN.

fell back on Huasteca, whilst the main body coasted the seaboard of the Mexican Gulf, building Blasillo, where palaces and temples are still standing, and Comalcalco (Centla). Here they divided; some following the Carmen lagoon entered Yucatan by Patonchan,

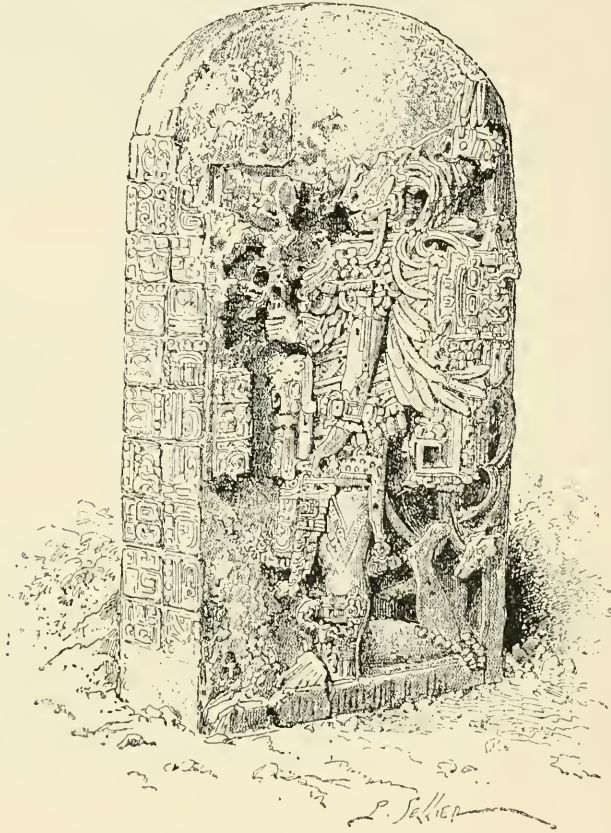


INSCRIPTION OF LORILLARD CITY.

of which the chief or reigning family were the Cocomes; Aké, Izamal, Mayapan, etc., were built by this branch.

The others directed their march towards the south and founded Palenque and Ocosingo, then falling back on the Usumacinta, settled at Lorillard and the more distant Tikal. Here took place the branching off which we mentioned above; one division, from which the Tutulxius were descended, going

north, founded Nohbeccan, Iturbide, Labna, Kabah, Uxmal, and Chichen ; whilst the other built Coban, Copan, and Quirigua, where they met and amalgamated with the branch which had followed the Pacific coast. The latter, after they had traversed the region inhabited by the Zapotecs (Oaxaca), tarried at Tehuan-



STELA OF TIKAL (FROM A. MAUDSLAY).

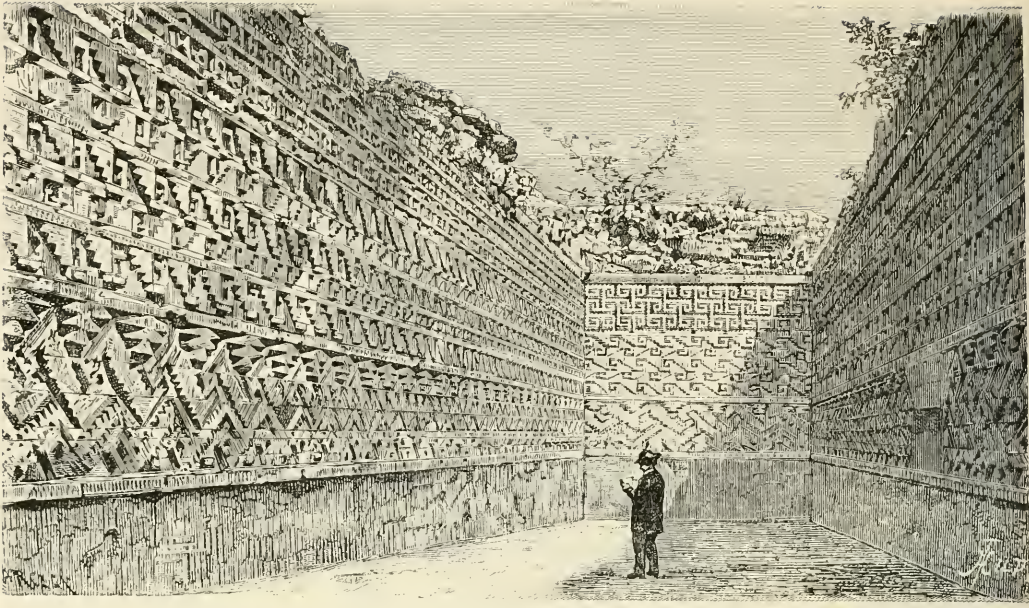
tepec, then resumed their march towards Guatemala, where they laid the foundations of Utatlan, Xelahu, Atitlan, Patinamit, etc., and joined the northern branch at Copan.

As will be seen, this is but a broad outline which leaves out a number of localities we could name, and many others which we do not know, but which we hope will be discovered some day.

We have also traced in our map the return march of the Iztas (or Iztaes) from Chichen to Tayasal.

The line in our Map which to the north goes into Huasteca, shows the course pursued by the Toltec branch mentioned by Ixtlilxochitl and Torquemada; and the monuments in that region, which all bear a resemblance with those of Tabasco and Yucatan, are the works of the Toltecs just as much as those of the above-mentioned states. We wish also to point out that the towns in this region, as yet unexplored, were inhabited and the monuments standing at the time of the Conquest, and that a few years sufficed to dilapidate and deface them.

Nicholas de Witt, who visited Huasteca in 1543, in a letter (1554) published by Ternaux Campan, says that the region contained great cities and was more thickly populated than any other, but that when he visited it, *twenty years* after the Conquest, it was deserted and covered with ruins; because some years before, the Spaniards had basely massacred the inhabitants. They had invited all the chiefs to a conference in a large wooden house, and burnt them alive. After this cruel act, the *Huastecs abandoned their town and retired in the woods.*



INTERIOR OF AN APARTMENT IN THE GRAND PALACE OF MITLA-OAXACA.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TUMBALA. S. CRISTOBAL. MITLA.

Return to Tenosiqué—S. Domingo del Palenque Revisited—Departure for S. Cristobal—First Halt—No Tamenes—Setting out alone for Nopa—Bad Roads—No Food—Monkeys—Three Days Waiting at S. Pedro—The *Cabildo*—Hostile Attitude of the Natives—The Porters Arrive—They make off in the Night—From S. Pedro to Tumbala—Two Nights in the Forest—Tumbala—The Cura—Jajalun—Chilon—Citala—A Dominican Friar—Cankuk—Tenejapa—S. Cristobal—Valley of Chiapas—Bullocks—Tuxtla—Santa Lucia—*Marimba*—Tehuantepec—Totolapa—Oaxaca—Santa Maria del Tule—Ruins of Mitla.

THERE is positively nothing new to say about the long, wearisome journey from Copan to Tenosiqué; it is the usual road through forest, with no incidents to mark it from former journeys, which besides we performed in Stephens' and Maudslay's company from whom we borrow both descriptions and monuments. We will therefore start from Tenosiqué, where our personal explorations begin.

In order to avoid going by Frontera, which I had visited several times, I returned to Palenque, crossed the Sierra of Chiapas, that I might see S. Cristobal, Tehuantepec, and the various Indian villages which are found along that road new to us.

As it was a long distance, offering many difficulties over almost impassable mountain paths, which at times are almost perpendicular, I dismissed my men and sent Lucian and one of my two servants to wait for us at Mexico, whilst Julian and I, with our arms and photograph apparatus, set out for S. Domingo del Palenque, where I engaged six men to convey our baggage over the Sierra to S. Cristobal.

I had been duly instructed upon the route I was to follow by the alcalde, so that leaving our men to come after us, which we were assured would be done immediately, Julian and I mounted our horses, and we were soon galloping in the direction of the rancho, which we reached towards ten o'clock; here our guide wished to return to Palenque, but I required him to await the arrival of the tamenes, who were not yet in sight, and with whom I could not communicate without his help. But the whole day passed in fruitless expectations, all the more disagreeable that they had all the supplies, and we were reduced to a large ball of *posole*,* not much for empty stomachs, so towards evening the guide went along the river's banks in search of snails, and we had to content ourselves with them for our supper.

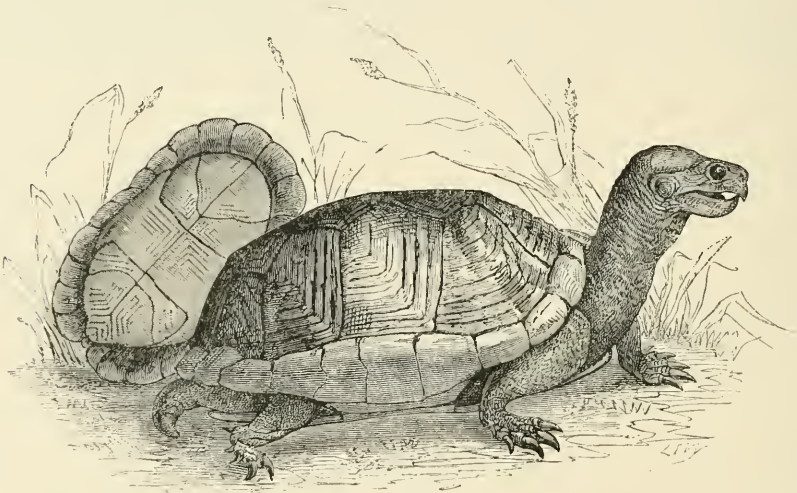
The following day I sauntered in the wood to do something, and found a tortoise of 8 or 10 inches long, having its lower shell furnished at both ends with two appendices, which enabled the fellow to shut himself up and defy all enemies, a true snuff-box tortoise. I thought at first of keeping it; but, alas for human

* *Posole* is like cooked hominy; it is mixed in water and forms a cool and nutritious drink.

resolve! by noon it was in the pot fast turning into delicious soup.

Two men who were returning from Palenque, brought us news at last of our porters; they had got drunk on the money which, according to custom, they had received in advance from us, an affray had followed, they had been handed over to the police and shut up in jail; they were, however, to be released on that very day, and a few hours would bring them to us.

The guide, who was anxious to go home, exchanged a few



SNUFF-BOX TORTOISE (*Cinostemon Leucostomum*)

words with the men which I could not understand, then informed me that they were willing to carry my luggage to S. Pedro, where we should find ample accommodation, plenty of supplies, and that it would be a better place to wait for our tamenes. I agreed, and we were soon winding up the sierra, which, at first gradual, soon became precipitous, obliging us to throw off our clothes and to retain only our nether garments, and even these we cut above the knee to facilitate our movements. The men carried everything, but far from feeling the weight put upon them, they seemed to have wings to their feet, and left us far behind to toil up as best we might.

At last we halted by the side of a stream, where our much reduced *posole* was entirely consumed amongst us all. Somewhat refreshed with the rest and food, we resumed our ascent, but towards evening the cravings of the stomach were again felt, and our sluggish legs refused to carry us much further. The porters had indeed drawn our attention to some *hocos* hovering among the branches, but I had missed one at a few yards' distance, and the scarcity of ammunition, the bulk of which was with the missing tamenes, made me unwilling to venture on another shot unless I was sure of it.

Poor Julian was fast losing heart; fortunately just then we heard cries of monkeys quite near, and deviating to one side we came upon a whole tribe of them perched in the queerest attitudes, which our approach did not seem to scare in the least, giving me ample time to take aim at a fine powerful fellow some fifty or sixty feet overhead, which I brought down with one single shot.

We had now reached a broad expanse of several thousand feet above the level of the ocean, and were only a few yards from the rancho Nopa, built for the use of travellers; the night was drawing near, and we were glad to get some kind of shelter. Meanwhile the female monkey had followed us with her two young ones, uttering the most lamentable cries; they had perched on a tree quite close, and the mother was now watching with mournful eyes her late lord being cut up.

But, alas for human sympathy! far from being touched at this mark of conjugal devotion, I only thought of the substantial meal we should make after our long fast, and that the animal was large enough to last over the next day for our breakfast, when with renewed strength we set out again, and after hours of wearisome toiling, we came upon a large river not marked on the map, which we crossed in a pirogue, and two hours more brought us in view of S. Pedro, an Indian village consisting of

about a hundred huts, scattered over some of the hillocks with which the plain is dotted. No admixture of white blood is seen here, and nothing but Indian is spoken.

I directed my steps towards the centre of the village, hoping to find a hut in which to rest our weary limbs; but the first I ventured into was occupied by women, who shrieked with terror on perceiving me and rushed out, whether at the arms I carried, or because I was white, must remain a mystery to the end of time. Their cries brought the whole female population into the street (the men were at the milpa), glaring at me and scampering away the moment I tried to get near.

My repeated inquiries for "el Gobernador" (the alcalde is so styled here), at last induced the boldest in the crowd to point to a large building to our right; I went in and found some young girls, clad from the waist in a cotton garment, engaged in breaking Indian corn on *metates*, whilst an elderly woman similarly attired was stirring a kind of Scotch broth, boiling on the hearth, the smell of which was so appetising that I immediately pantomimed to the old dame to give me some, showing at the same time a shining real in my open palm to help my eloquence. But the virago, brandishing her spoon in my direction, advanced to prevent my further ingress, pouring out a volley of questions and vituperations the while, which, of course, I could not understand, but which plainly meant that she was not to be persuaded by such means, and that the sooner I vacated the place the better for me.

I hesitated what I should do; but, reflecting that I was in the stronghold, with no better chance of a welcome anywhere, I determined to stand my ground, and going into the yard I seized the first fowl within my reach, wrung its neck, and holding it up to the woman, signed to her to cook it, presenting her with three reals.

The fowl had been eaten, and I was fast asleep under the verandah, when I was aroused out of my slumbers by the owners of the hut, who had just returned from the fields, and were now standing before me with hatred in their looks and demeanour. They were soon joined by others, and all signed to me to leave the place immediately ; I thought it no disgrace to yield before such numbers and to go to the *cabildo*, "common room," filled already with natives from various parts of the sierra on their way to or from "las playas." Here fortunately I found a meztizo who spoke Spanish and was civil enough to arrange with an old couple to provide me with some food twice a day, and who promised besides to hurry on my tamenes as soon as he met them.

Shall I ever forget the first night I spent in this horrible cabildo, where all the abominations which are inseparable from barbarians seemed to have concentrated in it : the atmosphere was such as could be expected in a room overflowing with unwashed, unkempt, uncared-for humanity, alive with dirt ! Sleep was of course out of the question ; whilst a tropical rain precluded our sleeping in the open air.

We had three days of this nameless, indescribable horror ; on the fourth the tamenes arrived looking rather foolish, displaying their bruises to account in some way for their delay. I was too thankful to have some clean clothes and a hammock in which to sleep, away from the filth of the last days, to think of reprimanding them, and I was so worn-out with the unrest of the preceding nights, that I slept on until broad daylight.

When I opened my eyes, I saw indeed my packages arranged as they were the evening before, but no tamene was standing by them. A horrible suspicion crossed my mind. I rushed out followed by Julian to look for them, but ere long I had to convince myself that they had made off in the night to save themselves another toilsome journey.

Armed with gun and revolver, I went round the village to find other porters, but my offers were met everywhere with jeers and defiant looks, until at last, disheartened and hardly knowing what to do, I bethought me of the old Indian couple that had cooked my dinner and had betrayed some signs of sympathy at our mishaps, and begged them to take care of my luggage until I should send for it from S. Cristobal. Then provided with only what I thought strictly necessary for three days' march (rugs, water-proofs, shot, a *posole* cake, and some ham), which I made into two bundles, one for Julian and the other for myself, we took the road to Tumbala, fervently hoping never to set foot in S. Pedro again.

I cannot say much for our first attempts at turning tamenes: the straps supporting our burdens cut into our flesh, we advanced slowly and with great difficulty, and although it was comparatively cool in the forest, I felt hot to suffocation; we stopped every five minutes to take breath and ease ourselves of our burdens, but after a while we got used to our new mode of life, which was not so bad after all, for we found plenty of water on the road, and towards noon we sat down by the side of a running stream to eat our ham and *posole*, when Julian felt so exhilarated by his present comfort, as to indulge in small jokes about our late sad experiences.

Still holding our course up the sierra, at night we encamped at a considerable height, not far from a spring, round which we cleared a kind of green tent, lighted a good fire, which we took in turns to keep alive, as a protection against moisture and wild beasts. As day broke I heard a cock crow, showing that we were close to some habitation, but according to my calculations we should reach Tumbala in a few hours, and having enough for our immediate wants, we only thought of pressing on to the end of our journey, where I knew we were expected, when everything would be made right.

And now the forest was truly grand, glowing in all the splendour of a tropical vegetation ; some of the arborescent ferns rising to a height of 40 feet, with far-spreading leaves, whilst the branches of the stately trees were gaily festooned with the entire family of orchids and other flowering parasites of the most brilliant hues. Long processions of *arrieras* (ants), laden with bits of foliage which they tilted up like a sail, gave them the appearance of a green moving belt.

Towards evening we met an Indian on his way home from "las playas," of whom we bought some maize-bread, and at night we encamped like the evening before in the forest. But a heavy storm arose ; the driving rain and hail penetrated our waterproofs, drenched our garments, and threatened to put out the fire as well ; the trees were cracking and falling about us like hail. By-and-by the rain ceased, and we could hear the hard breathing of a jaguar quite close to us ; but the wood, thoroughly saturated with the rain, smouldered on without burning up ; so that, in darkness which could be felt, I discharged at random the contents of my revolver, but the brute kept his ground until the first morning light, thus preventing our having any rest.

We rose with the lark, and, resuming our march, came in sight of Tumbala towards ten o'clock, having employed three days over forty-two miles ! The cura was out, and our clothes soiled with mud, rain, and adhering brambles, gave us such a sorry appearance, that the housekeeper at first refused us admittance. After a while the cura returned ; he was a man of about thirty years of age, with a benevolent countenance, full of kindness and sympathy over our hardships.

"Leave the tamenes to me to be dealt with as they deserve for their breach of contract ; although the rogues are likely to keep away until they know you are out of the district."

Meanwhile the dinner, to my deep satisfaction, was placed

on the table; I did ample justice to the viands, which were well cooked and neatly served, the wine generous and the Comitán brandy excellent, but my late harassing life had so weakened me that when I tried to get up I could not steady myself, so I went to lie down, and slept on until noon of the following day, when I felt completely restored and myself again. The priest lent me some clothes till mine came, which, by his care, had been sent for; and thus accoutred, I went about with him fully enjoying my return to civilised life.

Tumbala has nothing to distinguish it from other Indian towns; it stands on one of the highest levels of the *Sierra Madre*, girt with a dark belt of pines and long lines of shadowy hills, stretching away in the far distance. The population numbers about 12,000 inhabitants, who live in the forest rather than in their mud cabins, so that the pastor is sometimes three months without seeing the male portion of his congregation.

A taxation of six shillings per head a year is the only act of submission to the State exacted from this semi-barbarous but almost independent people. The Governor, generally a native, collects the taxes, but in all other matters he is the humble servant of the padre, in whom are vested all powers both civil and spiritual; on the whole he makes very good use of his immense influence, in curbing and directing these childish, untutored, ignorant people.

Crimes are punished by jail or the *bastinado*; if the treatment is primitive, it suffices in all cases, which may well be, for the number of strokes varies from twelve to one hundred and fifty.

Whilst I was here, I witnessed a curious incident: one day a woman came to the cura demanding justice against her son, who had been wanting in respect to her. The son, a big, tall fellow of five-and-twenty, was with her; both were the worse for drink. The priest remonstrated with the mother, but she was

obdurate ; the law allowed her twelve strokes, and twelve strokes she would have. "Never mind, Señor Padre, I know I don't deserve them, but she is my mother, and since it pleases her, I may well consent to it." He got his twelve strokes "*pro formâ*," after which they fell into each other's arms perfectly happy. On another occasion two brothers preferred receiving twelve strokes rather than make friends.

They own no money except what they earn as tamenes for the whites of the districts round about S. Cristobal. They still retain the character of the old tamenes, who followed armies and merchants in their distant expeditions ; they begin their apprenticeship at eight years of age, when they accompany their elders, carrying, like Æsop, the supplies of the company ; their load is increased from year to year until it sometimes reaches two hundred pounds. Their avocation is so ingrained in their habits, that they fancy they cannot walk unless they carry some weight, so that on their return journey they generally have a few stones at their back.

But the larger proportion of their earnings finds its way to the padre ; for marriages, christenings, confessions, burials, masses, etc., have all to be paid for, so that the priest of Tumbala is not badly off, but he shares with his bishop, who must have a well-feathered nest. Besides this, the simple natives give in kind of all they have ; they are proud when they are required to repair their pastor's house, to run his errands, or carry him over the sierra when he travels ; they consult him in all things, fully believing that the cura is able to help and see them out of all their troubles.

My luggage arrived at last, and as there was nothing to keep me any longer at Tumbala, I took leave of the hospitable priest, amply provided with food and letters of introduction to all the curas along the road, and set out for Jajalun, only a few hours

distant, on foot, for the simple reason that no horses or mules could be obtained.

Jajalun stands on the declivities of the Cordillera, sloping down towards the Pacific; the hills are clad with dark forests of pines, whilst fields show signs of careful cultivation, where black beans intervene with golden harvests of maize. The population has a good sprinkling of half-castes or meztizos, who speak Spanish and live like the ancient aborigines, in houses built with mud coated over with plaster; their manners are those of the villages of the Mexican plateaux, rather than of the settlements we have just visited. *Anteburros*, "tapirs," people the forests and the streams.

We were received in the same kind manner by the cura as we had been at Tumbala, and having thoroughly rested mind and body, we did not much mind having again to perform our next journey on foot. The road was good, and lay across level ground, we were well provided with all the necessaries of life, so that there was little to complain of; indeed, Julian was so set up with the good cheer and the kind attentions of the women during the last few weeks that, in his desire to entertain me, he sang nearly all the way what was meant to be a comic song.

At Chilon we found horses which carried us comfortably to Citala, where a Dominican friar, for the time being cura of the place, received us in his house and entertained us most hospitably. I found him a remarkably agreeable, well-bred man, of far greater culture than is generally the case with his brethren. Some years before he had published his views upon religious reform, and this had brought him in bad odour with his superiors. He was by nature of a sensitive, proud disposition, and he felt keenly the slur cast upon him by his banishment in which the best years of his life were frittered away, and his health undermined by the unhealthy climate and the absence of all social

intercourse. The days I spent in the society of this genial, superior man, seemed to flit by unheeded; whilst I was given opportunities of noting down new *traits* in the character of the natives.

One day I happened to be in the church, whilst the friar was in his confessional, and, to my surprise, I saw him confess two persons at the same time, each speaking loud enough to be heard at some distance. Naturally enough I expressed my surprise to the padre. "Oh! it is the custom here; they do not think anything of it, and it not unfrequently happens that I confess husband and wife at the same time. You are aware that the seventh commandment is utterly disregarded by these people; so that when they happen to confess together, they of course hear of each other's delinquencies, and the two culprits look daggers at each other across the grating. They are imposed a penance, which is always observed, are both absolved on their promise to go and sin no more, and the couple return peacefully to their home. It was a confession made in the presence of God, who has forgiven, therefore the husband has nothing to complain of; but if he found out the backslidings of his wife through any other means, it would go hard with her. Do not hurry away," said the padre, "to-morrow I join twenty couples in holy matrimony; it is a saving of time and drunkenness, for one entertainment will do for all."

I was much interested in a pretty patriarchal custom here, which consists in the female population coming up every evening to kiss their pastor's hand and ask for his blessing. I came in for my share, and had then the opportunity to notice that they are not remarkable for good looks; and, as the priest said, there is small merit in resisting the devil.

We wished the friar farewell, and continued our course to Cankuk; where the kindly "padre" procured some men to carry

us some twenty-seven miles of such bad road, that even the Indians do not trust their animals on it. It is the usual mode of travelling in this part of the sierra, but an uncomfortable feeling of the unfitness of things is experienced, in subjecting a fellow creature to become a beast of burden on your account. However, the feeling soon wears off, for they do not seem to mind it themselves, and they handle you about as they would a bale of cotton, and have a disagreeable way of flourishing you over fathomless abysses, which I found so trying that I deemed it prudent to perform the precipitous descent on foot.

This gave me the opportunity of stopping at my leisure to admire the grand prospect which from time to time opened out before us; the valley with its gay confusion of cultivated fields, and the houses of S. Cristobal shining in the sun. The ancient capital of Chiapas rises on a narrow plateau more than 7,000 feet above the level of the ocean, with a population of some 12,000 inhabitants; its climate is colder and damper than that of Mexico, and if we except the church of S. Domingo, possesses no edifice of interest. The houses are all built on the same pattern, and few are more than one story high, with no outer ornamentation of any kind. It looks what it really is, a poor, miserable place.

The market of S. Cristobal is the only one in Mexico where bags of cocoa are still used as currency, as in the time of Montezuma. The clergy of Chiapas, formerly so wealthy, has been deprived, like that of Mexico, of its emoluments and glebe lands, and the religious orders have also been suppressed.

We next follow the circuitous road to Chiapas, through a wild and dreary country, intersected by torrents, barrancas, and precipices of two or three thousand feet. We passed Ystapa, where the priest wished to know if France was a sea-port like Vera Cruz; and pressing on we reached the broad level of Chiapas, covered with sombre forests, bounded to the rear by the

hills of Tuxtla, whilst to the right and left the eye travels over a boundless distance. Along the river which traverses the plain, specks of white show where the town lies.

We only stopped at Chiapas the time necessary to change horses, and pushed on to Tuxtla, twenty miles beyond, now the capital of the province, where no mules could be hired, and we were obliged to buy horses to take us on to Oaxaca. No danger was to be apprehended, for the country was quiet; we were, moreover, fully armed and provided with a good map.

Osocantla, our first stage, exhibits abundant traces of volcanic action. We hold our course across great rolling plains, dotted with forests and patches of cultivation, intersected by broad rivers, and pass Santa Lucia, the finest hacienda in these parts, surrounded by huts occupied by the labourers employed on the property; it possesses a sugar-mill, and a granary for corn and maize, whilst the woods are peopled with wild turkeys, pheasants, numerous red aras, green parrots, and clouds of gaudy butterflies, rivalling the beauty of the vegetable creation nowhere so brilliant as here, where the river, with its interminable windings, casts across this privileged land a perpetual green and variegated mantle.

Life here is primitive and patriarchal: In the evening after prayers, the servants come round to take their orders for the next day, kiss the master's hand and wish him good night; then they all collect in the yard to enjoy, what they are pleased to call, an hour's rest, which consists in games, singing and dancing, some accompanying the singers on the *marimba*, a kind of piano which is played with small sticks topped by india-rubber paddings, an instrument found also in South Africa, where it bears the same name, whence in all probability it was imported to America by negroes at the time of the Conquest.

We resume our march, and pass successively Llano Grande, Casa Blanca, S. Pedro, and La Gineta; the latter is one of the

highest peaks of the sierra, clad with forests on the eastern side, but is only carpeted with grass towards the Pacific. We toil up its long winding ascent, but when we reach its summit, one of the grandest panoramas unfolds before our enraptured gaze. Looking back to the north, which we have just left, is the Cordillera, gradually sloping down from the high plateaux of Chiapas, to its deep, sombre valleys ; whilst beyond are vast plains, and in the far distance the glimmering light of the Mexican Gulf ; before us, to the south, is the verdant Gineta ; lower down, the rich plain of Tehuantepec, bound on the horizon by the broad sheet of the Pacific. The pass of the Gineta is very dangerous in winter, owing to the violent winds which then prevail, carrying off both man and beast.

As we advance haciendas disappear, and we find the sides of the roads dotted with villages as in Mexico. The population seems indolent and inert, content to pinch or starve rather than exert themselves beyond what they have been accustomed. Villages are usually built near running streams, in which women are seen the whole day bathing ; but, unlike Diana, they do not mind being looked upon, contenting themselves with turning their backs upon the intruder.

We steered our course safely through Zanatepec, Miltepec, but at Yaltepec we lost our way, and wandered about some time in the woods before we could find the main road, approaching Tehuantepec about nightfall, celebrated for its fair women, the handsomest in the State. They are cast in noble proportions, and have a dignified, erect carriage. Their dress consists of a short petticoat reaching the ankles, a jacket which leaves neck and arms bare ; a *nipil* embroidered with gold and silver covers their head, whilst their small feet are incased in dainty little shoes. Their dresses sometimes cost a hundred pounds, a large sum in this part of the world.



TEHUANTEPEC WOMEN.

In Tehuantepec are met the peculiar people known as *pintos*, "painted," no misnomer, for they are covered with sickly white patches extending sometimes over the whole body. The effect of these patches over their swarthy skin is most repulsive, and gives them the ghastly appearance of lepers.

There is little or nothing to be said upon our next journey, except that after S. Juan we enter once more the region of cactuses in all their variety, and arrive at Oaxaca dust-travelled and weary. This region enjoys a delicious climate, whilst its soil is most productive. Ancient ruins are numerous, but they are little known and still less studied, owing probably to the fact that they bear no resemblance to those that are known, and that no historians have mentioned them. Nevertheless, I should ascribe a Toltec origin to the very interesting ruins of Monte Alban, some miles distant from the town of Oaxaca, rising to a height of 4,930 feet, terminating by a partially artificial plateau, extending over one half square league, covered with masses of stones and mortar, forts, esplanades, narrow subterraneous passages, and immense sculptured blocks. The arches or vaults of these passages are formed by large inclined blocks of stone overlapping one another, and sculptured with human faces in profile, resembling the bas-reliefs and figures lately discovered at Santa Lucia Cosumaluapa in Guatemala.

The grandest ruins are to the south end of the plateau, consisting mostly of truncated pyramids about 25 feet high, having steep sides. Enormous masses of masonry show where palaces and teocalli once stood. The plateau is covered with fragments of lime, very fine pottery, on which a brilliant red glazing is observable. An Italian explorer, some years ago, opened some of the mounds, and found necklaces of agate, fragments of worked obsidian, and golden ornaments of fine workmanship.

These monuments are different from other ruins in the valley

or at Mitla, both in their architecture and materials, which consist of stones laid in mortar, whereas at Mitla, clay was used with large pebbles, faced with irregular stones, varying in size in different parts of the walls. The walls of the temples were perpendicular, and the ceilings flat; whilst at Monte Alban, we have the *boveda*, or overlapping vault.

Our explorations take us next to Mitla, leaving to our left the fine cemetery called the *Pantheon*; we pass Santa Lucia, where cock-fighting still forms the chief amusement of its inhabitants, and six miles further we come in sight of the charming settlement of Santa Maria del Tule, peeping out from among groves of pomegranate, cheremoias, and goyavias.

In the open space fronting the chapel, stands the old tree called *Sabino*, an object of great veneration on the part of the natives, who come from all parts of Central America to see it. Its greatest girth measures 14 paces or 33 feet, to the height of 20 feet, where it divides, carrying its vigorous branches 100 feet beyond. Some travellers have supposed that three stems had united to form its colossal trunk, but I was unable to discover more than one shoot, and its vigour is such, that several centuries more may safely be predicted for it.

We resume our march, steering towards the east where the valley becomes very narrow; we pass Tlacolula, following the spur of the hills, where open quarries still show half-hewn blocks left by the ancient builders of Mitla, and bearing to the right we reach S. Dionysio, the last place in the valley; and now Tatapala is fast disappearing in our rear, and bending to the left we approach an almost uncultivated valley with bare hills, where stand the funereal palaces of Mitla. Its sandy soil supports no vegetation, save a few pitahayas, yielding a delicious fruit the size of a swan's egg, having a strawberry flavour.

The ruins of Mitla, which at the time of the Conquest occupied

a wide space, are now reduced to six palaces and three ruined pyramids. In the square of the village stands an oblong edifice, 98 feet long by 13 feet wide, faced with unsculptured blocks of stone, with only one opening at the side.

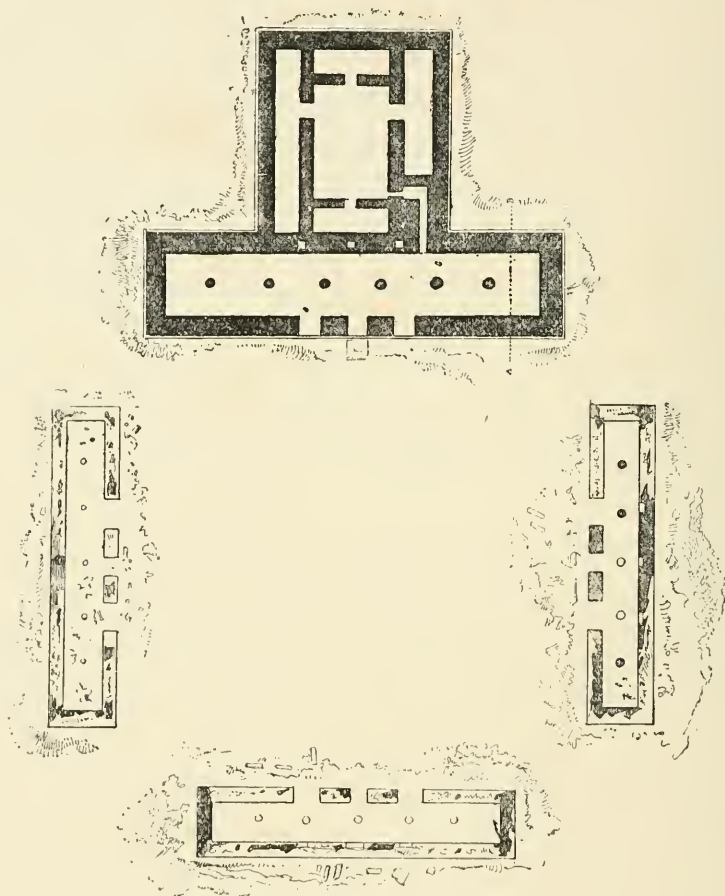
The next, in our general view of Mitla, is the first edifice to the north on the slope of the hill, consisting of a confusion of courts, buildings, and mosaic work in relief of beautiful and graceful patterns. Below are found traces of very primitive paintings, representing rude figures of idols and lines forming meanders, the meaning of which is unknown. The same rude paintings are found throughout the palace in sheltered places which have escaped the ravages of time. That such immature drawings should be found in palaces of beautiful architecture, decorated with panels of exquisite mosaic work, are facts which, at first sight, make it difficult to ascribe them to the same people.

I have called the first ruin the cura's house, because the venerable man, who has occupied it for the last fifty years, used the walls of the ancient edifice to build himself a spacious and comfortable house. The church adjoining it is also constructed with the material taken from the ancient palace.

Below, to the left, is a truncated pyramid, built with adobes, ascended by a stone staircase, having a Christian chapel on its summit. The Spaniards cleared it so completely of the ancient temple that no trace remains. The great palace, the walls of which are still entire, consists of a vast edifice in the shape of a Tau; the main façade faces south, and is the best preserved of all the monuments at Mitla, measuring 130 feet, with an apartment corresponding to it of the same dimensions, and six monolith columns which supported the roof now fallen in. Three large doorways gave access to the apartment, having a pavement covered with cement.

Both Torquemada and Clavigero, who wrote of these monuments from hearsay, erroneously ascribe 30 feet and 80 feet respectively to these columns.

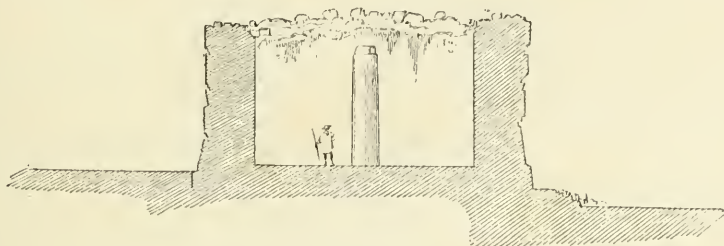
The only entrance to the inner court on the right, which is



PLAN OF CHIEF PALACE OF MITLA.

also cemented, is through a dark narrow passage, having the walls and the main façade covered with mosaic work in panels, framed with stones. The court is square, and opens into four narrow long apartments covered from top to bottom with mosaic work in relief, arranged in varied parallel bands, extending to the roof. The lintels over the doorways were formed of huge

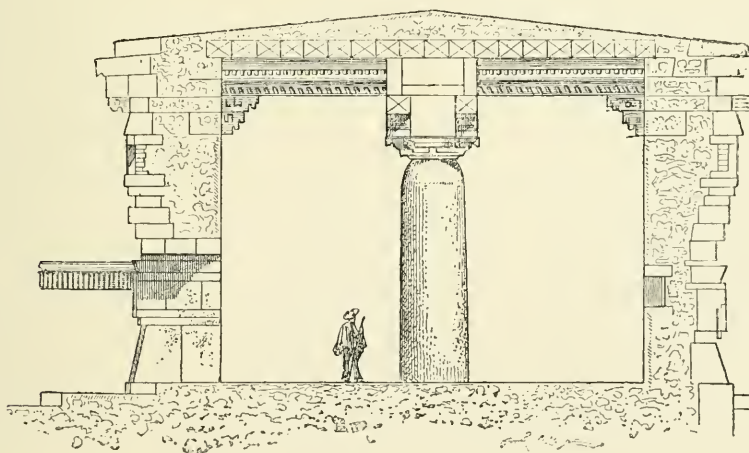
blocks of stone from 16 feet to 18 feet. We give a ground plan of the palace, and a cut of the great hall or apartment, together



SECTION OF PRINCIPAL HALL OF THE PALACE.

with a cut of the same hall restored by Viollet-le-Duc, who says of this monument :

“The three doorways, opening into the great apartment with columns, were partly walled up after the erection of the building,



GREAT HALL RESTORED (MITLA).

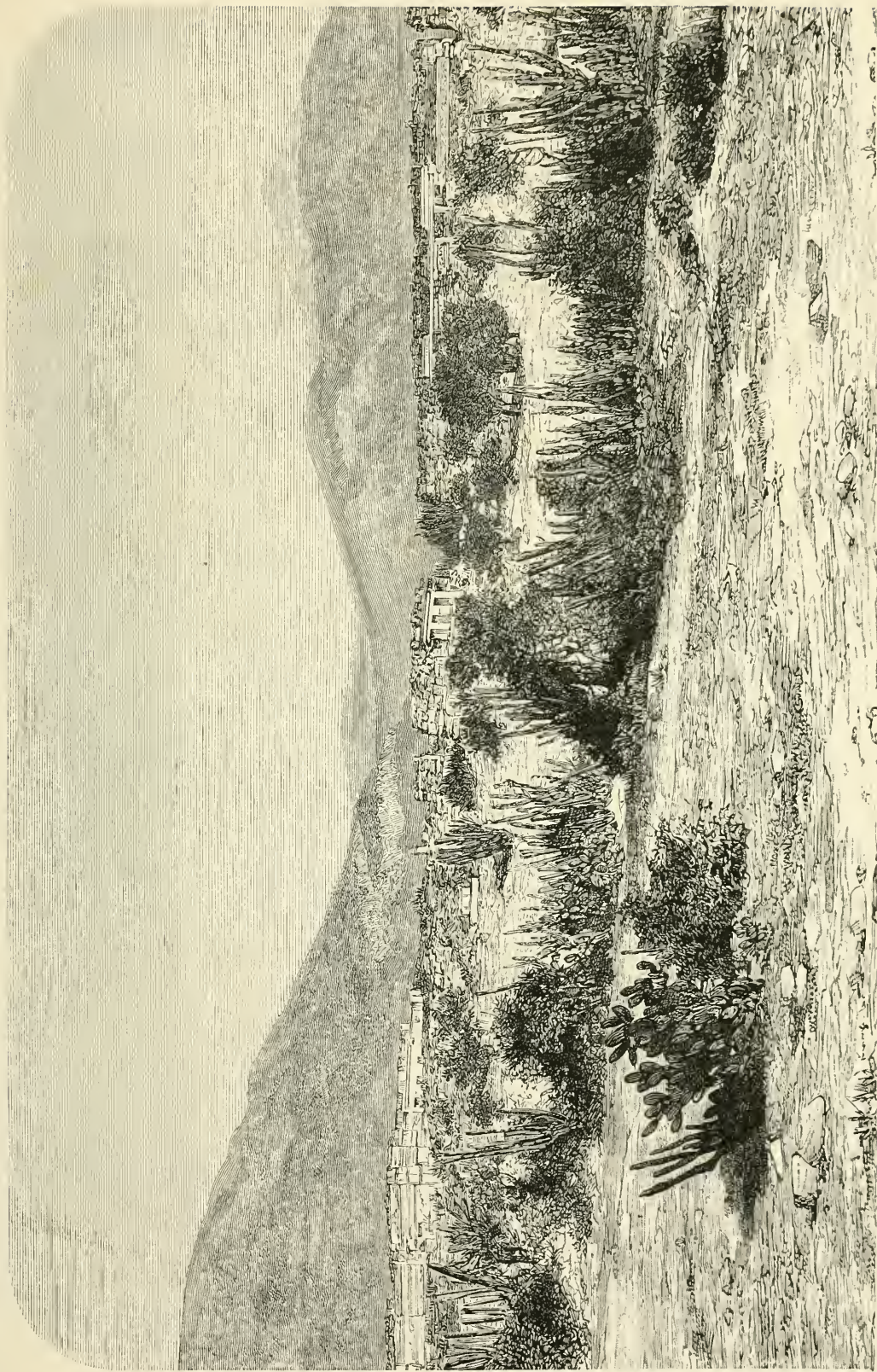
but are plainly visible. Over the doorways are four round holes, into which were probably fixed hooks supporting a portière. The monuments of Greece and Rome, in their best time, can alone compare with the splendour of this great edifice. The ornamentation is arranged with perfect symmetry, the joints are carefully cut, the *beds* and *arris* of the cornices faultless, showing

that the builders were masters of their art. The lintels in this monument consist, like those of Greece and Rome, of large blocks of stone; the ornamentation is a series of varied panels, set in elegant frames, composed of small stones beautifully cut, arranged in meanders, trellis-work, and diversified in their combinations." The distinguished architect ascribes these monuments, as also those of Yucatan and lower Mexico, to a branch of the southern civilisation (Malays), separated from the parent stock, and crossed many times with whites.

It will be apparent to the reader, that the ruins at Mitla bear no resemblance with those of Mexico or Yucatan, either in their ornamentation or mode of building; the interiors have no longer the overlapping vault, but generally consist of perpendicular walls, supporting flat ceilings, so that it seems almost impossible to class these monuments with those of Central America. Nevertheless, there are details which recall Toltec influence, as we shall show later.

The second palace is the most dilapidated of those which are still standing. The door, the sculptured lintel, and two inner columns, are the only remains which serve to show that the same arrangement was observed here, as in the great hall already described. The fourth palace is occupied on its southern façade, which we reproduce, by much more oblong panels, having three human figures or caryatides. Four other palaces, to the south, are almost level with the ground, the walls only rising 3 or 4 feet above it; but the enormous blocks of stone forming the basement, give them a massive appearance which is not observable in the palaces that are still standing.

The natives make use of them as dwelling-places. Subterraneous passages, which were opened some years ago, extend under these ruins; but the hostile attitude of the Indians caused them to be closed up again before they could be properly



GENERAL VIEW OF RUINS OF MILLA.

explored. The ruins are fast falling into decay, hastened by the natives who resort hither from all parts, and in their ignorance take away the small stones forming the mosaic work, with the idea that they will turn into gold. The local government could easily stop such Vandalism, but it does not seem to care.

We do not know the precise date of these monuments, except that they had long been in a state of ruin at the time of the Conquest, and Orozco y Berra* thinks that they were destroyed some time between 1490-1500, in the fierce contests between the Zapotecs and the invading Aztecs, a fact which would make them but little older than those we have described in the course of this work.

If there seems but little resemblance in the general outline between these monuments and those of the Toltecs or Mexicans, it must be evident to any one that some of the details, such as the masks and the small terra-cotta figures, are exactly like those at Teotihuacan; whilst the small crosses on the panels of the great palace, and those on the façade of the fourth, are facsimiles of those on the priest of Quetzalcoatl at Lorillard—assuredly a most important analogy.†

Torquemada ascribes a Toltec origin to these monuments, for he says: "After Quetzalcoatl had established himself at Cholula, in order to carry on there his work of civilisation, he built the celebrated palaces of Mitla."

According to Burgoa,‡ Quetzalcoatl was worshipped at Acihuitla; and in the great sanctuary of that town was an idol called the "Heart of the people. It consisted of a large emerald the size of a Chili pepper, surmounted by a sculptured

* Orozco y Berra, "Historia de la Conquista de Mejico," vol. II. p. 377.

† Torquemada, "Monarquía Indiana," lib. III. cap. III.

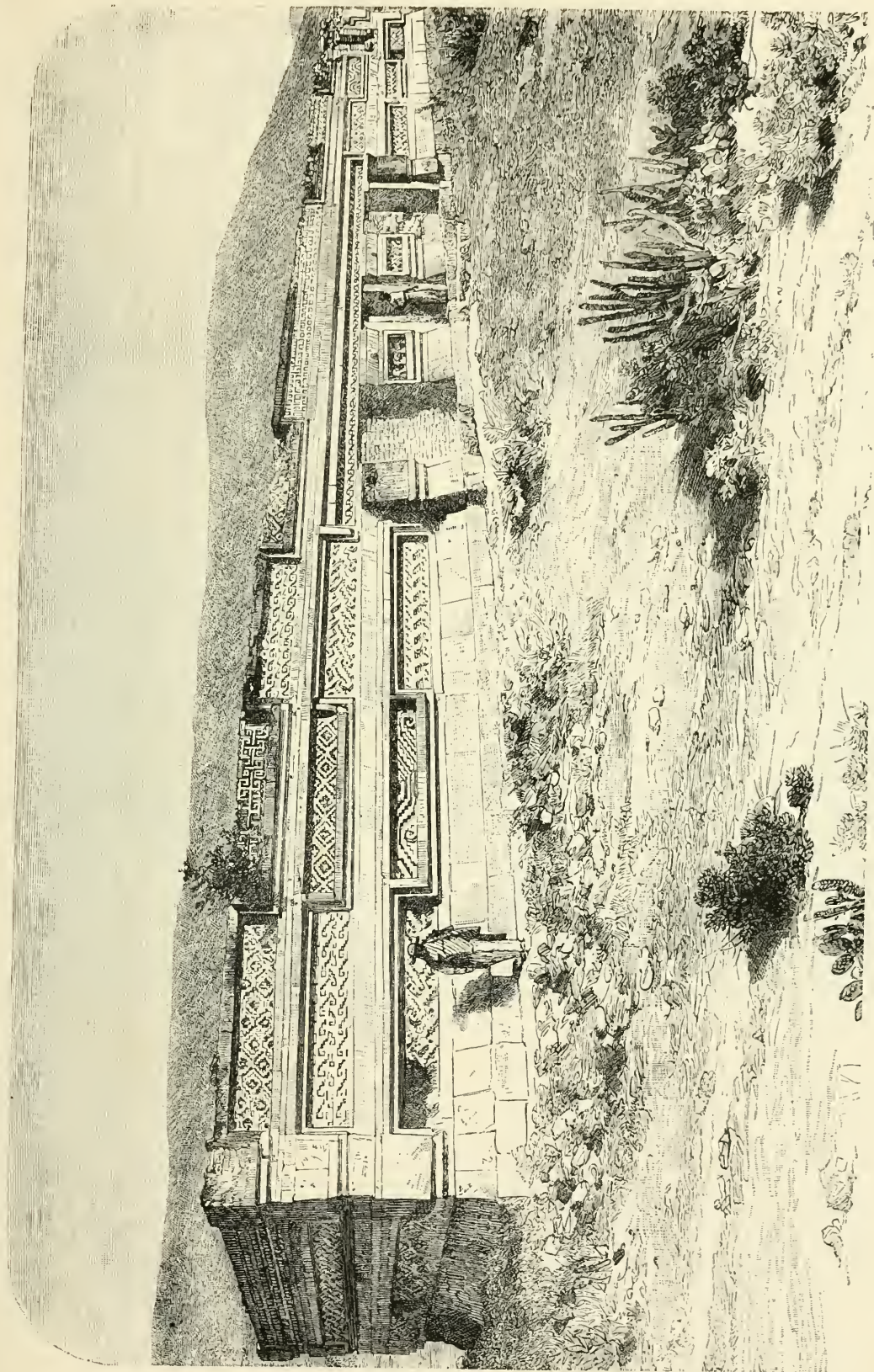
‡ Burgoa, "Description Géographique," chaps. xxviii., xxxix., and liii.

bird of exquisite workmanship, wreathed by a serpent. It was a gem of great antiquity, and so transparent that it shone like a flame; but the origin of the *cult* which surrounded it was forgotten." Orozco y Berra thinks that the snake represented Quetzalcoatl, and was a Toltec reminiscence.

The Zapotecs and Miztecs believed themselves autochthones; they were ignorant of their origin, and had preserved no record of the time when they established themselves in the country of which Teozapotlan was the capital. The original name of Mitla seems to have been *Liobaa* or *Yobaa*, "the place of tombs," called by the Aztecs *Mictlan*, or *Mitla*, place of sadness, hell, dwelling of the dead, a holy place devoted to the burial of the kings of Teozapotlan.*

The edifices consisted of four upper apartments finely sculptured, corresponding to an equal number in the lower or ground story. The upper story was divided between the high priest, whose apartment was the best furnished of all, the king, who retired here on the death of a relation, his retinue, and the levites. In the lower story, the sanctuary formed the central apartment, having a large slab which served as an altar, on which were placed the images of the various deities; the side apartments were devoted one for the king's burial, the other for the priests; the fourth, which is supposed to have been the largest, extended far out under ground, and was supported by columns like those of the main upper apartment or hall, having an entrance which was closed by a large slab. In this vast enclosure were thrown the bodies of the victims and the military chiefs who had died in battle. Besides these, there were those who consecrated themselves to the gods, when they were led to the mouth of this necropolis by a priest, the slab was raised,

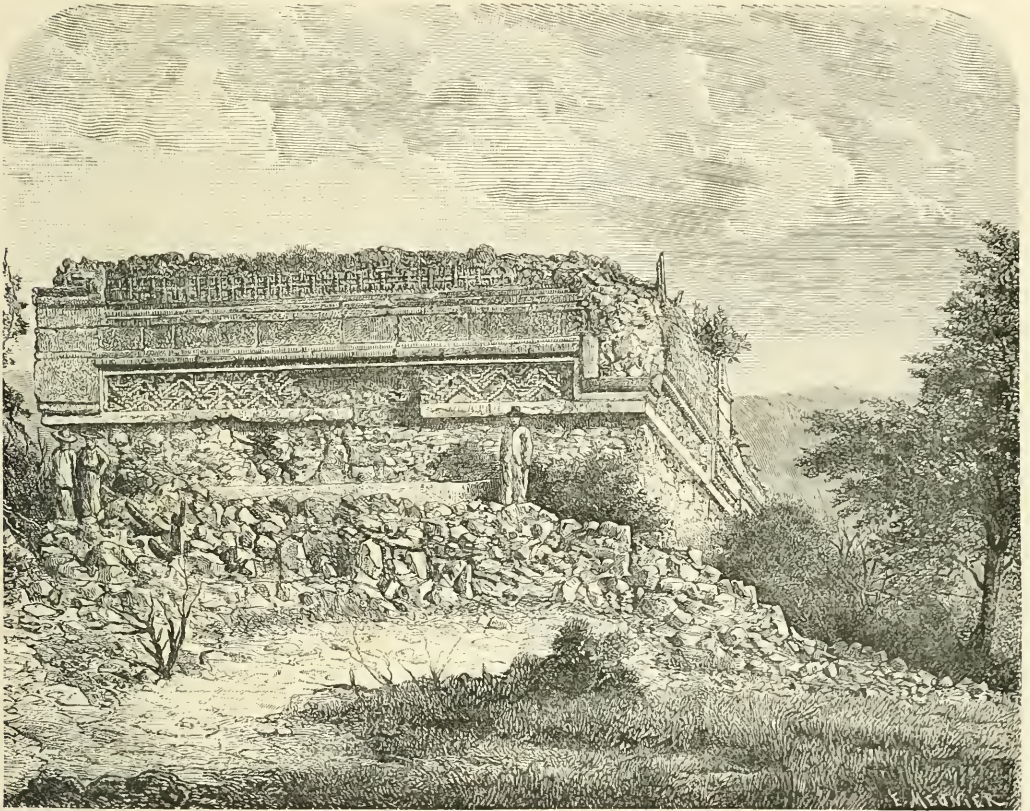
* Burgoa, "Description Géographique," chap. lviii.



GREAT PALACE OF MITLA-OAXACA.

and the self-devoted victim suffered to pass out in the abode of the dead.

The high priest was called "*Huiyattoo*," the great sentinel, he who sees all; his power, which was absolute, was even greater than the king's. No person of low degree could see his face



SOUTH SIDE OF FOURTH PALACE OF MITLA.

and live. He was the sole mediator between man and the gods; from him flowed all good gifts, both temporal and spiritual.*

It is probable that Burgoa never visited Mitla, for he only mentions one palace, whereas eight were still standing in his time. It seems strange that the Mexican Government should not undertake the exploration of these ruins, which, as they were

* Burgoa, "Description Géographique."

the burial place of kings and priests, must contain costly robes, jewels, arms, etc., perhaps even manuscripts that would be most valuable for a comparative history of the Zapotecs and Aztecs. This is all the more to be regretted, that there is a stir in the learned world respecting American ruins and American antiquities.

“In a word,” says Orozco, “great divergence is found between the Zapotec and Toltec civilisation; they seem to spring from a common source, their calendar is the same, and their writing nearly so; both had made great progress in architecture and ceramic art. But these differences, seemingly slight, deepen with a maturer study: although based on the same principles, Zapotec writing has different characters, and objects assume other conventional forms; colours are more glaring, and at a first glance it is impossible to confound a Miztec with a Toltec, Acolhuan, or Mexican manuscript.”*

To conclude, although we have visited the ruins of Mitla more than once, we have not made so careful a study of them, as of those in Yucatan and Central America; nevertheless it has been shown that both Torquemada and Orozco see a Toltec influence in these monuments.

* Orozco, “Hist. Antigua de la Conquista de Mejico,” tome II. part II. chap. iv.

THE END.

NOTES.

PAGE 269.—*Henequen*.—Annual fires are run over the country to clear the ground for the labourers, who then dig holes in the rocky soil and set out the henequen plants. When of sufficient size, the leaves are cut and carried to the “scraping machine,” which consists of a large fly-wheel, with strong, blunt knives carried around on the rapidly revolving wheel. The leaves are pressed by means of a curved lever, in such a way that the pulpy portion is scraped off, leaving the fibre. The men feed the machine with astonishing rapidity, pressing the leaf between the knives and lever with a motion of the leg.

PAGE 284.—*Indians*.—The great uprising of the Indians began in 1821, when Mexico separated from Spain. The large landed proprietors were everywhere opposed to separation from the mother country, whilst the bulk of the people, who owned no property, were in favour of it. Later the country was divided in two parties, in which one wished for an amalgamation with Mexico, whilst the other was against it. The aborigines cast in their lot with the latter, receiving arms and promises of independence. After the struggle was over and the Mexicans expelled, the Indians were dismissed to their homes, and the promises made to them were not kept.

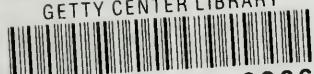
In 1846 the Indians saw their opportunity; they swept the eastern coast with fire and sword, and ravaged the country throughout. At last Mexico, having concluded peace with the United States, sent an army, and the rebels were very slowly driven back. But it was years ere peace was restored, and even now annual risings take place, whilst thousands of square miles are desolate, and hundreds of towns lie in ruins.

By calling in the aid of Mexico, Yucatan lost her autonomy, and became one of the Confederate States of the Republic.

PAGE 296.—Stephens ("Incidents and Travels in Yucatan," vol. ii. p. 441) says of the third monument, known as the Palacio—palace—the ascent is on the south side by an immense staircase, 137 feet wide, forming an approach of rude grandeur, each step 4 feet 5 inches long, and 1 foot 5 inches in height.

PAGE 427.—It is urged that Yalchilan should be written either Xalchilan or Jalchilan, *x* and *j* being convertible letters having a strong aspirate; but as doctors are not agreed, the name is suffered to stand as in the text.

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